

THE NARCOTICS THREAT FROM COLOMBIA

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE,
DRUG POLICY, AND HUMAN RESOURCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

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THE NARCOTICS THREAT FROM COLOMBIA

FRIDAY, AUGUST 6, 1999

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 9:10 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. John L. Mica (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Mica, Barr, Gilman, Souder, Hutchinson, Ose, Towns, Cummings, and Kucinich.

Also present: Representatives Reyes and Schakowsky.

Staff present: Robert Charles, staff director and chief counsel; Gilbert A. Macklin and Sean Littlefield, professional staff members; Cherri Branson, minority counsel; and Earley Green, minority staff assistant.

Mr. MICA. Good morning. I would like to call this meeting of the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources to order.

The subject of the hearing this morning is the narcotics threat from Colombia. As our regular order, I would like to start with an opening statement and then yield to those Members that are with us. We will be joined by some other Members, but we want to get started as we have several panels to hear from today.

This is a very important hearing since our hemisphere in the United States is facing one of the greatest challenges to regional and national security as the situation with Colombia continues to deteriorate. During the past few days, the United States military lost five American lives in the war on drugs being waged in Colombia. The influx of illegal drugs to the United States is our Nation's No. 1 social challenge and the most insidious national threat we have faced. Because three-quarters of the heroin on the United States streets and virtually all of the cocaine comes from Colombia today, this subcommittee is once again investigating and conducting oversight of our administration's counterdrug activities in Colombia.

For the record, I have been to Colombia several times over the past few years, most recently in February. I have seen firsthand the enormity and complexity of the drug insurgency problem there. Even since February, the threat has grown substantially. Events in the country appear to be spiralling out of control. Colombia is now what military officials call situation critical. Many of us on the Hill saw the situation coming years ago as this administration repeat-

edly ignored the problem. As a result, Colombia now supplies 80 percent of the cocaine entering the United States.

More disturbing, in just the past 5 years there has been an absolute explosion of poppy cultivation in Colombia. High purity Colombian heroin in tremendous quantities is now flooding our communities. Heroin overdoses have doubled in the past 2 years, and that is those ending in fatalities. Since 1992, heroin use by our teenagers has soared 825 percent.

Our DEA heroin signature program indicates that 75 percent of the heroin seized in the United States originates in Colombia. This chart was provided to us by Tom Constantine, the former DEA director. If you took this chart several years ago, it would be almost zero. Most of it would be coming in from southwest Asia, Asia, and Mexico wasn't even on the charts.

Cocaine was merely processed in Colombia some 5, 6 years ago. Now, Colombia is the major producer of cocaine in the world.

Compounding the problem, Colombia faces a full-scale guerilla war, one that is financed almost entirely by narcotics trafficking. By recent accounts, the armed conflict is now raging out of control in Colombia. Rebel insurgents are becoming more and more aggressive and killing people indiscriminately. In fact, more people have been displaced in Colombia than in Kosovo even at the height of the recent conflict, and there are indications of a potential mass exodus from Colombia. More than 300,000 Colombians were internally displaced just in 1998, compared to 230 in Kosovo during that same period of time. In short, despite 5 years of congressional pleas for assistance to Colombia, countless hearings and intense congressional effort, resources approved by Congress have failed to be provided to Colombia.

Two weeks ago today, five American men and one woman from the United States Army were killed in the line of duty in Colombia when their United States reconnaissance plane crashed on a mountain on a counterdrug mission into narcoguerrilla territory. This marks the first time in United States history that American military personnel have been killed in action in Colombia's drug war.

American blood has also been spilled on Colombian soil in other ways. In addition to these five Americans, three contract pilots have been killed in Colombia over the past 2 years. Three Americans were abducted and brutally murdered by the FARC, still not brought to justice. We will show some tape in a few minutes that raises questions about why the murderers of these Americans have not been captured. They were killed by Colombia's largest group of drug trafficking guerrillas earlier this year, and numerous Americans have been kidnapped by Colombia narcoguerrillas.

The longest held U.S. hostages are three American missionaries from my district, which have been unaccounted for since 1993. Additionally, nearly 5,000 Colombian policemen have been killed by narcoguerrillas, and nearly 40,000 Colombians have been murdered in this conflict over the past decade. In fact, more deaths occurred in Colombia last year from the drug war than in Kosovo during the recent inhumanity we saw in that country. Yet, this war is not recognized by the United States and has been largely ignored by this administration.

Our U.S. drug czar recently confirmed that the dual threats of narcotic trafficking and the rebel insurgency have become indistinguishable. While the administration grasps for an effective policy to deal with what they have now termed an emergency, Colombia's narcoterrorism now poses the single greatest threat to the stability of our entire hemisphere.

What brought about this situation and what brought us to the brink of this disaster? Today, we will examine this question along with a series of other critical issues, including this administration's inability or unwillingness to deliver drug fighting support and equipment even today to our trusted allies in Colombia. Time and again, this administration has ignored the emerging situation in Colombia despite congressional oversight hearings that have tried repeatedly to call attention to the impending crisis.

In February and July 1997, the subcommittee held oversight hearings on the counterdrug problem in Colombia. In March 1998, the subcommittee held an oversight hearing on regional counterdrug efforts. At the same time, the House International Relations Committee held a hearing on Colombia's heroin crisis in June 1998. They also held a hearing on the implementation of the western hemisphere drug elimination act in March 1999, and recently they also held hearings on Colombia and Panama and the situation there.

By contrast, this administration has compounded the situation in Colombia by reversing course on important policy issues. Just recently, this administration issued a policy reversal on information sharing with the Colombian military.

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, who heads the Colombian National Police, and also cutoff IMET training and critical equipment so badly needed in that country at that time.

Executing any effective antinarcotics program has been fatally handicapped by 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. It wasn't bad enough that we did not give them information that we should be sharing. We now have a situation, with the forced closing of the Panama Air Force base and the United States being kicked out of Panama, in which our forward surveillance flights are down to almost nothing. This gap in surveillance capability has put the entire region at risk now and for many months to come.

This administration has also displayed a schizophrenic approach to providing aid to Colombia. While very publicly calling for \$1 billion in emergency aid last week, the same administration requested only \$40 million for Colombia just 6 months ago and blocked assistance—all assistance there 2 years ago. Indeed, in a bold display of hypocrisy, the administration's fiscal year 2000 budget request did not include a single dollar of the \$280 million authorized by Congress for Colombia under the Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act, an emergency congressional appropriation which was initiated by the former chair of the Drug Policy oversight Committee, Mr. Hastert, in the last Congress.

Yesterday, I found that Mr. Hastert, now Speaker of the House, again chaired this responsibility in the previous Congress. Saturday, November 29, it is an op-ed, Voice of the People, in the Chicago tribune. It is 1997, and this is just two sentences out of his statement: With 60 percent of all heroin seizures being Colombian dope—now, I showed you the chart that we got. We are up to 75 percent, but this was at that particular time—what has the Clinton administration done to combat this latest craze? The short answer is nothing but vacillate.

Then he also went on to say, the White House and its drug czar, Barry McCaffrey, must develop a strategic plan for combating the looming heroin problem. He asks why helicopters that are Huey helicopters, which can operate safely at altitudes, and ammunition must get to Colombia. These are questions that he asked in 1997, why they were not getting there.

Without objection, I would like to make this part of the record.
[The information referred to follows:]

Chicago Tribune

FOUNDED JUNE 10, 1847

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28 Section 1

Saturday, November 29, 1997

Voice of the people

Move now in Colombia drug war

WASHINGTON—Daunting statistics about the future of our nation's schoolchildren are haunting parents and striking fear deep into our hearts out of concern for their well-being. Specifically, are our classrooms safe and conducive to learning?

Recent reports say no, showing drug use on the rise among America's school-age children. In fact, more than half of all 12-year-olds surveyed say they know someone their own age or younger who has tried drugs. The latest fad of the drug culture affecting our kids is increased use of heroin—a most addictive narcotic. Many dealers in major cities are providing their cocaine customers and our youth with heroin free of charge in an all-out blitz to get them hooked. The latest National Drug Survey shockingly estimated that there are 141,000 new American heroin users, most of them under age 26. Even more daunting, the price of heroin has never been lower, and our streets have never seen a supply so pure. This is a lethal combination.

With 60 percent of all heroin street seizures being Colombian dope, what has the Clinton administration done to combat this latest craze? The short answer is: nothing but vacillate!

The Tribune reported and editorialized recently that the administration had agreed to a \$50 million aid package to help Colombia. What the Tribune failed to mention is that not one dollar of that aid has been delivered to date. Meantime, there has been a dramatic increase in terrorist activity against the Colombian people, including more than 200 police officers murdered by leftist narco-guerrillas who are now officially recognized as terrorists by our State Department.

The White House and its drug czar, Gen.

Barry McCaffrey, must develop a strategic plan for combating the looming heroin problem.

The Andes Mountains' high altitude provides the perfect environment and climate for growing opium poppy. The Colombian National Police (CNP) is frantically attempting to eradicate the poppy plants—which ultimately are refined into street heroin—but consistently meets heavy resistance from the better-equipped and heavily armed narco-terrorists.

To provide cover for eradication forces, the CNP "good guys," unfortunately, must fly outdated Vietnam-era UH-1H Huey helicopters well above safe operating altitudes and must consider if they have enough ammunition to complete the objective without unnecessarily compromising the safety of their officers.

The \$50 million package would help our drug-fighting partners fly safely at altitudes above 5,000 feet. The administration must move forward and provide UH80 Blackhawk utility helicopters to the CNP. This, however, is just one necessary step in the overall battle plan.

Last month the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed an aggressive plan to obtain a drug-free America by 2001. My National Security subcommittee targeted several areas where our proposals will help to reach the goal.

Harvesting of the coca and poppy plants is well underway, and the narco-terrorists are on an all-out offensive to protect their drug supply. In this country, 20,000 Americans died of drugs or drug-related violence last year alone. In Colombia, more than 4,000 CNP officers and Colombian military have been killed over the last nine years. Something must be done before it's too late.

U.S. Rep. J. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.)

Mr. MICA. This administration has resisted congressional efforts to ensure that needed drug fighting equipment makes its way to Colombia in a timely manner. The administration has fought us on Black Hawk utility helicopters getting to Colombia for the past 3 years and to date not a single Black Hawk helicopter has yet made it to Colombia. Notably, there is one sitting right now on a tarmac in Stamford, CT.

Likewise, this administration fought us on upgraded Huey II helicopters for the Colombian National Police. Again, to date, only 2 of 12 upgraded Huey II helicopters have made it to Colombia despite the fact that right now 4 Huey II helicopters outfitted and ready to go are sitting on a Tarmac in Ozark, AL. These Huey II helicopters are vital to protecting planes which conduct crop eradication in Colombia and vital to getting the cocaine labs and vital to eliminating high altitude heroin poppies.

I will show a tape in a few minutes, and you will also see the results on the Colombian forces and what has happened by not getting the adequate equipment there.

Today, there are reports of increased activity by the 15,000 Marxist narcoterrorist guerrillas also known as the FARC. This army of insurgents, heavily financed by the drug traffickers, controls nearly one half of Colombia and now actually threatens the hemisphere's second oldest democracy.

As chairman of this subcommittee, I am deeply concerned that the FARC army has gone largely unchecked and is expanding now beyond Colombia's borders. The United States can ill afford further instability in this region. With 20 percent of the United States' daily supply of crude and refined oil imports coming from that area and with the strategically important Panama Canal located just 150 miles to the north, the national security implications of Colombian rebel activity spilling over into neighboring countries are now enormous.

I just spoke about 20 percent of our oil supply. I obtained some tapes from a private firm, videotapes, and with permission, I would like to show them. It takes approximately 3½ to 4 minutes. This graphically displays what we are facing.

Could we play those tapes, please?

These are private tapes by a commercial. Can we advance that a little bit? I think they didn't start it at the right point. I just want to show 3½ minutes of it.

These tapes were taken by a private firm that was hired by the oil pipelines to try to protect the oil pipelines there, but it shows the kind of equipment that we have been attempting to get to the national police, which they don't have. It is absolutely incredible that a private firm can get this equipment—has gotten this equipment down there. These pictures were taken in 1997 and 1998.

[Tape played.]

Mr. MICA. Again, we did not get the helicopters that they requested there.

[Tape played.]

Mr. MICA. These pictures were all taken with night vision equipment. Everything you see is at night, and they have never been shown before. Again, this is all commercial equipment.

[Tape played.]

Mr. MICA. This is a commercial firm identifying the murders of three American citizens. Again, all infrared at night.

Mr. REYES. What kind of infrared is being used here?

Mr. MICA. Just a sophisticated infrared, but it is commercial.

This gives you an idea of what is going on there, the difficulty we face. The helicopters that were requested by Chairman Hastert when he was chairman were not there. The equipment is not there. The insurgency that we face, the inability of us to even go after—provide equipment to go after the murderers of Americans, and yet a commercial firm can easily identify them.

Finally, the ecological damage that is being done to that country and the attempts by the Marxist guerrillas to cutoff the oil supply, which certainly is in the vital interest of the United States.

In conclusion, with drugs flooding our borders and this pending regional turmoil, our vital national interests are undeniably at stake in this situation. We face a very serious and growing challenge. The question is what policies and strategies our country and our executive agencies in this administration will adopt to meet the threat and protect the vital interests of the United States in this region.

Excuse me for taking more than my time, but we wanted to provide the subcommittee with that information.

I am pleased at this time to yield to Mr. Towns, who is acting as our ranking member this morning.

Welcome, and you are recognized.

Mr. TOWNS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. When you are the chairman, you can use a lot of time.

Mr. MICA. I learned that from you, sir.

Mr. TOWNS. Let me begin by first thanking you Mr. Chairman, the ranking member, Mrs. Mink, and the members of the committee for the work that you are doing in this area. Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing on the narcotics threat from Colombia.

Between 1990 and 1998, Colombia received about \$625 million in United States counternarcotics assistance. In addition, the United States military provides 160 United States service personnel as military advisors to the Government of Colombia. This infusion of aid has made Colombia the third largest recipient of United States military assistance in the world.

Despite this commitment of money and manpower, the GAO estimates that coca production in Colombia has increased by 50 percent since 1996. In a June 1999, report, GAO estimated that Colombia currently produces 80 percent of the world's cocaine and 60 percent of the heroin used in the United States. Given our level of support and our level of effort, these results call our current policy into question. What they would say in my neighborhood back in Brooklyn, it appears that we are hustling backward.

It is my understanding that recently there have been calls for an additional \$1 billion in assistance for Colombia. However, given the dismal results we have seen for the money we have spent thus far, I am not sure that more money is the answer to this question. Additionally, many aspects of the situation in Colombia seem to require our reexamination. There is a civil war in Colombia that has been going on for approximately 40 years. The Government of Co-

Colombia has lost 40 to 50 percent of the country's territory to left wing rebels. The State Department and numerous human rights groups have reported that paramilitary groups aligned with the army of Colombia murder and kill civilians because of their political beliefs. And drug traffickers may have corrupted every side of this conflict by supplying vast amounts of money and means to continue the kind of chaos that allows the traffickers to continue their illegal operations.

Mr. Chairman, there are many problems in Colombia. It seems to me that additional military spending will only exacerbate the chaos in Colombia. Unilateral United States action is not the answer, and I am convinced of that. The Colombians need to reignite the peace process. The United States needs to involve the international community and especially other Latin American countries in a peacekeeping effort. We need to provide humanitarian and development assistance to the people of Colombia. I think that is important, but, most of all, we need to address the cocaine threat here at home by increasing our prevention and treatment efforts. We need to have more slots for treatment of people, and we need to have a stronger education and prevention program.

Again, Mr. Chairman, let me thank you for holding this hearing today. It suits you for all the work that you do in this area, and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses. I see we have two outstanding Members of Congress who have visited that country many, many times, Congressman Gilman and Congressman Burton. I look forward to hearing from them as well.

At this time I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA.

Thank you. I would like to recognize our vice chairman, Mr. Barr, the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. BARR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just heard one of the most amazing statements I have ever heard, that we are here trying to assist against the narcoterrorist war down there, and we have had somebody say that trying to provide additional U.S. military assistance, much of which has been promised and not delivered for many years, will exacerbate the situation.

I don't know how to respond to that sort of statement. In looking at the crisis in Colombia and trying to think up an analogy that fits it, I thought of several—the tail wagging the dog for many years, where our State Department zooms in with an electron microscope and looks at some allegation of human rights violation, never mind the vast human rights violations perpetrated by the FARC and the other groups.

I have also thought of Nero fiddling while Rome burns, except Nero was replaced by the State Department; or what many have tried to do in the State Department over the years and that is simply hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil and refusing to acknowledge for years until, apparently, today. I see at least the State Department representative will acknowledge that there is indeed a narcoterrorist problem facing this hemisphere in Colombia.

But the situation is far beyond trying to find ways of describing the mismanagement of the U.S. State Department in responding to this threat to our hemisphere. The only bright spot is it could be

much worse were it not for the work of DEA and our military in trying desperately to assist our allies in Colombia, most notably the heroic General Serrano, in meeting this tremendous threat, despite what seemed to be deliberate efforts recently by the State Department to thwart the efforts of DEA, refusing to fill billets authorized by Congress for additional DEA slots, refusing to allow the provision of additional helicopters and gun mounts, and even today helicopters that were promised to be down there by the end of last month are still sitting stateside somewhere.

It indeed is a crisis made worse by the fact that the United States is going to completely withdraw its forward military operations, which have been very important in the counternarcotics efforts, from Panama, turning the Panama Canal and all of its military assets that we have shared and operated with the Panamanians in a very successful effort over the years back over to Panama without any provision for continuing that very, very strategically important base of operations.

It will be very interesting to hear from General McCaffrey, who has just recently returned; and of course I suppose we should thank the State Department for, at least now, recognizing that there is a narcoterrorist problem in Colombia. But there is indeed a crisis down there, and rather than turn a blind eye to it and say our military assistance is causing it, the most preposterous statement I can imagine, we ought to be desperately searching for ways to assist our allies in Colombia. Because this indeed is a serious problem that is not just a problem for the people of Colombia, the people of Latin and Central America, and the United States, but the entire hemisphere. I appreciate our colleagues being with us today to share their extensive knowledge on this and look forward to the additional panels.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. With the indulgence of the subcommittee, I am going to recognize one person from the minority and then recognize our two chairmen. Have the chairman of the full committee and a member of our subcommittee.

Mr. CUMMINGS, did you want to make a brief opening statement?

Mr. CUMMINGS. Of course, Mr. Chairman. I certainly do.

First of all, good morning to everyone; and I am certainly pleased to be here.

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have, serving on this subcommittee, tried to address the problems of drugs throughout the world and certainly this country; and I am sure that you are well aware that I am a strong advocate of sound counternarcotics efforts; and I will say it every single time I have an opportunity.

Sometimes I really just think we don't get it. This morning I left my community of Baltimore, a drug-infested area where a lot of the drugs that we are talking about today have already taken the lives of so many children, the same children that I watched 14 or 15 years ago as they grew up now walking around like zombies. This is only 40 miles away from here. I am very concerned about what is happening in Colombia, and I think we ought to do everything we can to address this issue.

I come here today to speak for the dead; the ones who don't even know where Colombia is; the ones who, like I said, a few years ago

had hope; the ones who had become victims. And I call them victims because every time I see one of them standing on a corner like a zombie, the pain—I cannot begin to tell you how painful it is because I know they are in so much pain that they don't know they are in pain. And that is why it is so important to me and to my district that we concentrate more of our efforts on treatment.

I think Mr. Towns said it quite nicely. He used the term "hustling backwards."

Let me tell you something. If you don't have a demand, you don't have to worry about Colombia. You don't have to worry about it. But neighborhood after neighborhood throughout this country—and if it has not hit yours, it will. Neighborhood after neighborhood. People who cannot afford these drugs right now as we speak are breaking into houses to get \$5, \$10 or whatever for crack cocaine.

What are answers? We have one level of sentences for powder cocaine, another for crack. In Baltimore, our jails are filled with black men and black women rotting away.

And so it is that today you say that we come here to address this whole issue of Colombia. And sure it is Colombia, but there is a direct link—and I admire you, Mr. Burton, and I admire you, Mr. Gilman, but I want you to do me a favor. I want you to come to my neighborhood and understand why I push for treatment so very hard. There are not enough treatment slots. We probably have—for every treatment slot that we have, we probably have a demand for 100 people who want to get off of drugs.

The chairman said something that I agree with. He said, we must look again, in his opening statement, we must look again at our strategies and policies and protect the vital interests of the United States. Mr. Chairman, I agree with you 100 percent. We must look at them and reevaluate them. Because as I see this Colombian war with these rebels and folk going against each other, I don't know how much we can do there, but I know what can be done in my neighborhood when some high schools have 80 percent of the young people dropping out between 9th grade and 12th grade, many of them standing on corners going nowhere fast. And so if we are going to reevaluate, let us make sure we reevaluate to provide more treatment.

Sixty percent of the heroin used in the United States is from Colombia. The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has estimated 55,000 heroin addicts are in the State of Maryland and 71 percent of them live in Baltimore city. Keep in mind, Baltimore only has a population of 674,000. I have a serious crisis in my district.

Although I have some concerns regarding the large amount of funding requested to address the complex problems in Colombia, I am eager to hear from the witnesses today as to how we can work together to get these drugs off of our streets. And I thank you, and I look forward to the testimony.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman from Maryland.

I am now pleased to recognize a gentleman who serves on our subcommittee and also chairs one of the most important committees in the House of Representatives, the chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Mr. Gilman.

Mr. Gilman, you are recognized.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank our colleagues on our subcommittee for holding today's very important and timely hearing on the narcotics threat from Colombia and also what we should be doing in reevaluating our drug strategy. I appreciate what Mr. Towns and Mr. Cummings have said with regard to their concerns and criticisms of our existing strategy.

I want to commend you, Mr. Chairman, for your continuing efforts through this committee giving attention to the effectiveness of our drug war and focusing the Nation's attention on what we should be doing. The presence this morning of two full committee chairmen with oversight responsibility in the international fight against illicit drugs I think is indicative of the seriousness of this problem, especially as related to Colombia.

You have pointed out some very important statistics, Mr. Chairman. We all recognize that Colombia is probably one of the most significant drug-producing nations in the world, producing some 80 percent of the world's cocaine. As if that were not bad enough, in the last 6 years and while the administration seemed to be looking in another direction, Colombia captured 75 percent of the American heroin market. It is now producing 80 percent of the world's cocaine and capturing 75 percent of our heroin market.

Colombia is in our own backyard. It is not over in Asia. It is not thousands and thousands of miles away. Its capital city, Bogota, is just 3 air hours from Miami. What happens in Colombia is immediately effective in our cities and our streets, in our school yards and our communities. The deadly drugs it produces and exports and the sophisticated drug-dealing organizations that are in charge of the world's trafficking of drugs impact our Nation.

Illicit drugs are directly linked to the growing strength and aggressiveness of the narcoguerrillas who today threaten Colombia's very survival as a democracy. Congressman Rangel and I, when we were working on the Select Committee on Narcotics, stood in the plaza of the capital city of Colombia and saw how the drug traffickers had invaded the Supreme Court of that country and taken it over and held the judges hostage. I don't know if Mr. Towns was with us at that time. It was appalling to see how the drug traffickers had their impact on the very core of the government of that country. The narcostate status, is a term used today very often when they discuss Colombia. Columbia is on the verge of becoming a narcostate.

Our Nation's response under the current administration to both the increasing drug threat and the growing insurgency menace in Columbia has been benign neglect at best and I venture to say gross negligence at worst. We have been providing significant funding in many areas, but we have not been providing an effective strategy and effective resources.

The response to the contention that the answer to all of this is to reduce demand I think leaves something to be desired. I think those of us who have been involved in the drug problem—and I have been involved since my coming to Congress some 27 years ago—I think we all recognize in examining various strategies that you must not just reduce demand, and that is important, but you must also reduce supply, and you must do both simultaneously.

And you reduce supply by going to the sources, by eradicating. And then when it gets into the mainstream of distribution you interdict, and then when it gets to our shorelines you convict and make sure that our police agencies have the wherewithal to do that, and then associate that with reducing demand through education through our curriculum in our schools and then also to treat and rehabilitate. But we can't take money from one to give it to the others.

I mentioned to Mr. Cummings, the mayor of Baltimore had thought that legalization for a long period of time was the way to go. I don't think legalization is the way to go. It only proliferates the problem. I think some of the countries overseas such as Netherlands and Great Britain tried that and found it not to be effective. We must bear in mind that we have to focus our attention on all of these areas and do it simultaneously and not take the funds from one to give to the others as we regrettably have done by our present administration. The lives of thousands of our children have been affected by the administration's neglect on the source side.

Mr. Cummings, I went to Baltimore. Kweisi Mfume took me there to examine some of the problems years ago. And we recognized that there are problems in each of our major cities and we have to do a better job of educating but also we have to cut down the supply that goes to those cities, especially a failed one-dimensional drug policy based on treating the wounded from drug use here at home. It has not been effective. Recognizing that burgeoning Colombian heroin problem in our Nation and an absence of an effective strategy by the administration, a number of us in the Congress as far back as 1996 pushed for more aid, more resources to try to stem the flow from Colombia. We called for better helicopters for the hard-hitting antinarcotics police in Colombia to pursue the opium poppy and its source and to get to the higher Andes plateau where a good deal of the opium for heroin was growing.

It has long been our United States' law enforcement consensus that getting the Colombian poppy before it is processed into heroin was the most cost-effective strategy, particularly with the limited growth of some 6,000 hectares of Colombian opium. It is a plan that would most likely succeed. Geographically, Colombia is bigger than the States of Texas and Kansas combined. Its rugged, high-altitude terrain makes operations difficult for the law enforcement community. Accordingly, air mobility for antidrug operations is critical.

The courageous Colombian National Police, have lost over 4,000 in fighting this war. Through the drug eradication program, they estimated they have a need for 100 helicopters to be able to do the job properly and that they could eradicate if they had that kind of equipment; 90 percent of their antidrug operations requires helicopters and 40 percent of their time, they face hostile fire. You saw what happened to one of the helicopters under hostile fire in that short video we just saw.

Today, the drug police in Colombia have less than 25 helicopters operating. Only two of the six twin-engine helicopters the State Department provided them for opium eradication last year are flying today. The rest are "hangar queens." You might examine some of the photos over here of what they look like. They are sitting in the hangars, incapable of conducting the kind of operations that are

needed. Is there any wonder then why the drug battle at the source has been so ineffective in Colombia?

Yes, we are spending money, but we are not doing it effectively or in the right direction. We in the Congress have appropriated sufficient money to purchase and directed the delivery of over 30 new high-performance, long-range, high-altitude-capable helicopters to the drug police in Colombia to eradicate drugs at their source; and we have continuously urged an increased mobility approach since 1996. And, to date, despite our continuous urging, regrettably the administration has delivered only two of these new helicopters to the drug police flight line in Colombia. Regrettably, both of those choppers were ill-fitted, ill-equipped, and one was damaged on arrival.

As a result of these kind of failures, the Colombian heroin availability in our Nation has been extremely high. The price of this deadly Colombian heroin on our streets remains low while the purity is higher than we have ever seen, and that results in the deaths and overdoses in our communities unabated from Colombian heroin that could have and should have been eradicated of the source in the high Andes years ago. Yes, reduce demand, but also reduce the kind of supply that is increasing the demand.

Mr. Chairman, the administration's failure to get to the opium poppy fields of the high Andes in Colombia is directly responsible for the massive heroin crisis on the East Coast and the United States, and it is not just Baltimore. Our cities in New York State are facing a severe heroin impact as well as cities across the country.

If the administration were to devote the same amount of effort to the real war on drugs in Colombia as the State Department does in explaining to our committees and yours why already paid for helicopters have not arrived to Colombia, I think we would have won that war by now. If the administration was serious about stopping drugs at its source, those high-performance helicopters would have been in Colombia long ago doing the job that Congress intended to do, eliminating hard drugs at their source before they reach our shores and before they get into cities like Baltimore and elsewhere.

Accordingly, Mr. Chairman, I urge that when we hear these new pleas on some in the administration for massive amounts of emergency aid to Colombia for the fight against drugs, let us ask why anyone should take them seriously based on the abysmal track record of providing aid to date.

We will hear today about the massive increase in coca production in Colombia. That, too, is partially the result of this failure to deliver the kind of equipment that is needed by the Colombian National Police [CNP].

Mr. Chairman, Colombia's development as an expanding narcostate is not new. In 1997, Colombia overtook Peru as the world's No. 1 producer of cocaine. We in Congress pleaded with the administration for immediate action, and all we got was more dithering. Peru's willingness to take the steps necessary to drastically reduce coca production forced producers to move across the border into southern Colombia. There the CNP is unable to reach

the numerous remote coca fields without the armed long-range choppers that Congress has demanded.

There are fundamental differences in philosophy between those of us in the Congress who monitor the Colombian situation closely and the administration. The administration, without a significant counternarcotics strategy of its own, has been willing to sit back and has become a cheerleader for President Pastrana's fizzling peace process without backing it up with aid and support to get at the heart of the problem, the illicit drugs financing the growing insurgency in Colombia. President Pastrana, Colombia's President, though well-intentioned cannot achieve peace from a position of weakness.

Regrettably, our State Department has contributed to the current confused policy of Latin America's oldest democracy. That confusion has flowed from meeting with FARC leaders last December in Costa Rica and failing in providing this basic antinarcotics aid to take away much of the source of the insurgency's strength the illicit narcotic moneys; and they are substantial, in the billions of dollars.

Let us make no mistake that we in the Congress want peace in Colombia but not on the terms of the narcoterrorists. I think that is the direction in which Colombia is heading. The actions of the FARC have demonstrated that it has no intention of peaceful resolution. It is still kidnapping people, still killing people, some of whom are Americans. The future of Colombia and the issue of illicit drugs are intimately related.

The tragic loss of five American servicemen and their two Colombian Air Force partners not long ago on a counter-narcotics mission in the high Andes shows us that the fate of that troubled nation and ours are closely linked. We ignore events in Colombia at our own peril, and I hope the alarm bells that General McCaffrey has recently sounded are not coming too late, and we thank General McCaffrey for sounding that alarm.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman, member of our subcommittee, chairman of the International Relations Committee.

I am pleased to recognize at this time the chairman of our full committee, also an ex-officio member of our subcommittee, for his statement.

Mr. BURTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Mica.

I would like to preface my remarks by saying to Mr. Cummings and Mr. Towns that I share their concern about making sure that the people that have become addicted have an avenue for returning to society, but I would like to point out to them that the administration's counternarcotics budget in fiscal year 1998 was \$16.5 billion for treatment and prevention and only \$1 billion for overseas eradication. That is not to say we should not do more. Maybe we should do more, but we should certainly provide more resources to fight the producers and the drug cartels around the world.

There are a number of reasons why Colombia is important. One of those is because, should democracy fall there and a narcostate prevail, where a Marxist-led government run by the FARC narcoterrorists succeed democracy, we are at severe risk here in the United States. Colombia is the oldest democracy in Latin

America. It has vast oil reserves and plenty of untapped natural resources.

The strategic importance of Colombia to the United States is that it controls access to the Isthmus of Panama, which will control the Panama Canal in just a few months. The world's economies rely on access to the Canal. Should Colombia's democracy fail, the result could be a domino effect through all of Central America.

Is all this likely to happen? Probably not. But could it happen? You bet. It could happen.

Back in the 1980's, we had a real problem in Central America with the Sandanistas and the FLMN in El Salvador, so Nicaragua and El Salvador and Guatemala and Honduras were all at risk. We thought we had put all of those problems behind us, but, in my mind, they have been resurrected by the narcotraffickers in Colombia. Because if they succeed there and Colombia becomes a narcostate, then the Panama Canal right next door, right adjacent to it, is likely to be imperiled, and they can move up right through the Central American region, and we are going to have an immigration problem that you wouldn't believe as well as more military problems.

The time for action has been upon us for some time. I am encouraged that there is finally some concern by the administration. They are finally recognizing the need for a source country strategy in response to the influx of hard drugs on American streets and American school yards.

Chairman Gilman, Speaker Hastert and Chairman Mica and myself have been writing letters and holding hearings for nearly 3 years trying to get someone in the White House to pay attention. Instead of a source country strategy, we have gotten an unbalanced approach, heavy on domestic treatment and prevention, which statistics show has failed, and light on interdiction and eradication, which is the preference of law enforcement.

It is unfortunate that it took the tragic deaths of five Army personnel in Colombia to enlighten this administration that there is a problem down there. A blind person could have seen there is a problem.

Colombian President Pastrana has underestimated the FARC's capabilities. He has overestimated his own ability to hold together a shaky democracy marred by four decades of civil strife and supported by a false economy based in large part on money from narcotrafficking. By capitulating to the FARC demands in the peace negotiations, President Pastrana and Colombia's democracy are in worse shape now than when the peace process began.

If we haven't learned anything throughout history, we ought to learn this. Appeasement does not work, and giving the narcotraffickers an inch is going to encourage them to take a mile.

Someone needs to ask, what does the FARC gain from peace? And the answer is, they do not gain a darn thing. Currently, the FARC has an estimated income of \$100 million a month from facilitating narcotrafficking, kidnapping and extortion. They have a demilitarized zone the size of Indiana where guerrilla-style, cowardly attacks are planned and launched and where attackers can vanish back into oblivion. They have the Pastrana government exactly

where they want it, hunkered down, absorbing repeated attacks with little ability to respond.

Clearly, the FARC has no incentive to reach peace, and Colombia has endured a year's worth of escalated violence just to prove it. Absent a peace strategy of its own, the U.S. State Department has blindly backed Pastrana's fledgling peace efforts. At Pastrana's request, American diplomats negotiated with and legitimized FARC leaders last December. This is the same FARC that the State Department placed on its own list of world terrorist organizations. It has been a policy of this government for years and years and years not to negotiate with terrorists, and yet our State Department went down there and met with them and, as far as I know, are still negotiating with them in one way or another. Despite this, one American diplomat continued to contact the FARC leaders even after the murder of the three Americans in March.

The lack of counternarcotic strategy by the Clinton administration has never been more evident than in drug czar Barry McCaffrey's \$1 billion aid package. This is less than 1 year's income for the FARC guerillas. Think about that, less than 1 year's income to the FARC, this money targeted the Colombia Army, rampant with allegations of human rights abuses. In Colombia in 1997, General McCaffrey said he supported Black Hawk helicopters for the Colombian National Police [CNP], known as the best counternarcotics police in the world.

However, days later in Washington, General McCaffrey opposed counternarcotic aid to Colombia, the world's top drug-producing country. He wrote that the Black Hawks "would threaten to undermine the objectives of the United States international counterdrug policy." Two different opinions, and I would like to submit these letters for the record, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. Without objection. So ordered.

[The information referred to follows:]



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY
Washington, D.C. 20503

Personnel

October 2, 1997

The Honorable Benjamin A. Gilman
Committee on International Relations
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

*John A
L...*

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Want to thank you for your leadership and attention to counterdrug matters, especially in Colombia. ONDCP supports providing the assistance the Colombian National Police need to operate effectively against the drug traffickers. In my many meetings with General Serrano, I have been struck by his dedication, professionalism, and honesty -- things he surely passes on to the people who work for him. Their success against the narcotraffickers affects our future. We have a responsibility to work cooperatively with them.

However, want to express my concern regarding discussions about earmarking funds in the Fiscal Year 1998 appropriations for of the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL). Understand that there is discussion of a \$50 million earmark for Blackhawks and other helicopter support for the Colombian National Police. This would be in addition to the \$25 million for Bosnia Police, which was not in the Administration request, in the House passed bill. Taken together, such earmarks, if not resourced, will come at the expense of important U.S.-supported counterdrug programs in the rest of the world. As it is, the INL budget is constrained to support counterdrug programs that are necessary to significantly diminish the quantity of drugs entering the U.S. and sold on our streets. I am working with Secretary Albright to see what steps the Department of State can take to improve the situation.

If these potential earmarks are included in the FY 98 INL appropriation, the INL-supported counterdrug programs in countries such as Mexico, Bolivia and programs in Central America would be seriously affected. Bolivia would suffer particularly, just as a new government is making strides to implement an ambitious plan to rid the country of illicit coca cultivation within the next five years. The INL-supported program in Mexico would be cut in half. The programs in heroin-producing countries would be cut to a bare subsistence level at a time when the U.S. is fighting a growing heroin abuse problem.

Appreciate your efforts to support our national drug control policy. Request your assistance in finding a solution to this dilemma that will achieve our overall goals of keeping drugs off the streets of the United States and ridding the world of the narcotraffickers' corrupting influence.

Respectfully,

Barry R. McCaffrey
Director

The earmarks would be a disaster.

10/07/87 17:28

--- NAME MURRAY @802/002



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY
Washington, D.C. 20503
October 2, 1987

McCarthy

10 07 87

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Pelosi:

Want to express my concern regarding discussions about earmarking funds in the Fiscal Year 1988 appropriations for the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL). INL programs are vital to supporting the international component of the National Drug Control Strategy. The House-passed bill earmarks \$25 million for the Bogota Police, which was not included in the Administration request. Understand that there is discussion of a \$50 million earmark for Blackhawk and other helicopter support for the Colombian National Police (CNP). Taken together, such earmarks threaten to undermine the objectives of United States international counterdrug policy.

We support providing the assistance the CNP needs to operate effectively against the drug traffickers. However, if this support is not received, the helicopters will come at the expense of important U.S.-supported counterdrug programs in the rest of the world. As it is, the INL budget is constrained to support counterdrug programs that are necessary to significantly diminish the quantity of drugs entering the U.S. and sold on our streets. I am working with Secretary Albright to see what steps the Department of State can take to improve the situation.

If these potential earmarks are included in the FY 88 INL appropriation, the INL-supported counterdrug programs in countries such as Mexico, Bolivia and programs in Central America would be seriously affected. Bolivia would suffer particularly, just as a new government is making strides to implement an ambitious plan to rid the country of illicit coca cultivation within the next five years. The INL-supported program in Mexico would be cut in half. The program in Guatemala would be cut to a bare subsistence level, as would the programs in Southeast and Southwest Asia -- all heroin-producing countries -- at a time when the U.S. is fighting a growing heroin abuse problem.

Request your assistance in finding a solution to this dilemma that will achieve our overall goals of keeping drugs off the streets of the United States and ridding the world of the narco-traffickers' corrupting influence. Appreciate your leadership on and attention to counterdrug matters.

Respectfully,

[Signature]

Barry K. McCaffrey
Director

Mr. BURTON. How could Black Hawk helicopters hurt our counterdrug effort?

He then complained that Chairman Gilman and myself were trying to "micromanage the war on drugs." Simply put, there's no war on drugs being waged by this administration, unless you count the nearly \$200 million General McCaffrey spends annually for ONDCP television ads and these frisbees, on these frisbees and key chains that are up on the easel up there in front.

This is more than we spend our counternarcotic efforts in Colombia, the source of more than 80 percent of the cocaine and 75 percent of the heroin in the United States. Counternarcotics aid to Colombia has been abysmally low until this year, when Chairman Gilman and I were successful in getting Black Hawks funded for the Colombian National Police, which I want you to know has not yet been delivered.

General McCaffrey should have been developing a heroin strategy, but the fact of the matter is there has been no heroin strategy from this administration. The Republican Congress has been forced to do the administration's job and then fight to get the necessary equipment down there.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to enter several op/ed pieces into the record to clearly establish that Congress recognized the heroin problems several years ago and has attempted to force a reluctant Clinton administration to even address the issues.

Mr. MICA. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. BURTON. General McCaffrey has just returned from Colombia, and surely he will present you with his firsthand account of the situation. News reports quote him as proposing a \$1 billion course of action, which will help save Colombia from both the narco-traffickers and the FARC terrorists. \$1 billion is a lot of money, but as I said before, it's less than the estimated \$1.2 billion the FARC takes in every single year from drugs, kidnapping and extortion.

General McCaffrey's proposal undoubtedly includes funds to stand up a Colombia Army capable of counternarcotics operations, which sound good on the surface, but given the tainted human rights record of the Colombian Army, even in vetted units, it is unlikely aid to them would pass the administration's litmus test for the "spirit of Leahy." This, of course, is the law named after the Senator from Vermont prohibiting lethal assistance without cutting through a mountain of bureaucratic red tape.

This is the favorite first obstacle that the State Department usually places in front of any assistance to Colombia. The Colombian Army, while understandably a pet project for a former CINC SOUTHCOM is in tatters, and even the Pentagon estimates it would take a Herculean effort and more than 5 years to vet, train and equip a Colombian Army capable of handling this mission. Regrettably, Colombia may not have 5 years of democracy left.

The good news is there's a group in Colombia who is already in place, are well trained, and are willing to do what needs to be done to fight our war on drugs. They're the Colombian National Police, headed by the legendary General Jose Seranno. In a poll in last week's Colombian newspaper, *El Tiempo*, Seranno's popularity, 71 percent, is second only to the Catholic Church with 77 percent. Co-

Colombians proudly say, after my God, my General Seranno. General Seranno's men have a clean human rights record and the desire to do the job. All they need is the equipment.

Mr. Chairman, actions speak louder than words. This administration has promised Chairman Gilman and myself more than 40 new helicopters for the Colombian National Police since 1996. As of this morning, only 2, only 2 of the 40 are on the flight line in Colombia. Why can't the State Department get these helicopters to General Seranno?

Mr. Chairman, out of curiosity, I checked with the Indiana Army National Guard. They have 32 Hueys and 7 Black Hawks. Today General Seranno has only 23 operating helicopters to cover his entire country, where 95 percent of his missions require helicopters, and that's the size of Texas and Kansas combined.

Before Congress embraces or considers General McCaffrey's \$1 billion aid package, shouldn't the administration be forced to make good on its commitments to General Seranno and the Congress regarding helicopters for the Colombian National Police? Congress has many questions, but General Seranno has more than 4,000 questions, which represents the lives of the men he's lost fighting our war on drugs.

The State Department's record on delivery of assistance to the CNP is abysmal at best. Even if we pass this proposal today and work every day for the next year, General McCaffrey knows there are no way that that aid could reach Colombia next year either due to incompetence or lack of will at the State Department. Clearly, this is an effort to say the Clinton administration finally did something about drugs before next year's election cycle.

It is coming way too late. This chart shows the string of unkept promises by the administration. It could be much longer, but we chose only to highlight the helicopter situation.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to insert a stack of unkept State Department promises, including dozens of letters on everything from ammunition to weapons to helicopters, into the record at this point.

Mr. MICA. With objection, so ordered.

Mr. BURTON. I will turn my attention to the State Department's insatiable desire to mislead Congress on what is actually happening in Colombia. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement has a history of incompetence and inability to deliver counternarcotics assistance, which is its job. Every new Assistant Secretary who comes in, Secretary Beers included, says they cannot be responsible for the actions of the previous Secretary. Secretary Beers, the buck stops here. You have told me and my staff on a number of occasions that the first tranche of 35 new Huey II helicopters would be in Colombia last fall, then you said in March, then April, then June, then July. Now it's August. When are they going to get there?

I was told by Ambassador Robert Gelbard in September 1996 that 10 of these were going to be delivered. That was 3 years ago. There was only two on the flight line this morning. There have been four Hueys, Huey IIs, ready for shipment from Alabama for a number of weeks. Why haven't they been delivered?

Your department dropped the ball on this, and it is not the first time. In June of last year, you sold Mr. Hastert, Mr. Callahan and

Mr. Souder on trading three Black Hawks for six Bell 212's and 10 Huey II helicopters. Chairman Gilman and myself reluctantly accepted your compromise because you gave us your word.

Today, I'm told by narcotics affairs section personnel in Colombia, four of those six Bell 212's are not flying. Secretary Beers, despite your testimony at the International Relations Committee in March, they have never had more than four in the air at any one time. Chairman Gilman, I am sure, remembers it very vividly as well. You told us, "Congressman, I can assure you these will not be hangar queens." And as Chairman Gilman pointed out, they are.

I don't know that we have those up there again, but I hope before this hearing is over, we will once again be able to look at the condition of the helicopters that were in when Secretary Beers gave them to the CNP. They spent several million dollars to repair these aging helicopters. Further INL got rid of these helicopters just before they were scheduled to go down again for 6 more months for the mandatory 5-year checkup. So we are sending them junk. Will these piles of metal ever be of use to General Seranno?

So it is a facade, it's a facade. General McCaffrey would have to rely on this same State Department crowd to get this \$1 billion aid package delivered. By the time this assistance would arrive in Colombia, we would be trying to figure out who is going to be the last—who is going to be in the last helicopter off the roof of the American Embassy in Bogota. Because of inaction by this administration, the risks to freedom we helped eliminate in the 1980's in Central and South America could very well reemerge, and reemerge with a vengeance.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I am glad Colombia is finally on the radar screen of this administration. Maybe someone at the White House will finally hear our pleas to get General Seranno the helicopters and the equipment he needs. I just hope the 4,000 CNP officers have not died in vain and that democracy will prevail.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your statement.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Dan Burton and the information referred to follow:]

Chairman Dan Burton

8/6/99

Subcommittee on Drug Policy, Criminal Justice, and Human Resources

“The Crisis in Colombia”

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for allowing me to testify at this important hearing on the terrible situation in Colombia. I'm joined at the witness table by my good friend Chairman Gilman, who has been a partner of mine for many years in trying to bring this situation to the attention of the American people and an apathetic Clinton Administration.

Colombia is important because, should democracy fall there, and a narco-state prevail, or a Marxist-led government run by the FARC narco-terrorists succeed democracy, we are at severe risk here in the United States. Colombia is the oldest democracy in Latin America. It has vast oil reserves and plenty of untapped natural resources. The strategic importance of Colombia to the United States is that it controls access to the isthmus of Panama, which will control the Panama Canal in a few months. The world's economies rely on access to the Canal. Should Colombia's democracy fall, the result could be a domino effect through all of Central America. Is all of this likely to happen? Probably not, but could it? Absolutely.

The time for action has been upon us for some time. I am encouraged that there is finally some concern by this administration. They are finally recognizing the need for a source-country strategy in response to the influx of hard drugs on American streets and schoolyards. Chairman Gilman, Speaker Hastert and myself have been writing letters and holding hearings for nearly three years trying to get someone in the White House to pay attention. Instead of a source-country strategy, we have gotten an unbalanced approach, heavy on domestic treatment and prevention -- which statistics show has failed -- and light on interdiction and eradication -- which is the preference of law enforcement. It is unfortunate that it took the tragic deaths of five US Army personnel in Colombia to enlighten this administration that there is a problem there.

Colombian President Pastrana has underestimated the FARC's capabilities. He has overestimated his own ability to hold together a shaky democracy marred by four decades of civil strife and supported by a false economy based in large part on money from narco-trafficking. By capitulating to the FARC demands in the peace negotiations, Pastrana, and Colombia's democracy, are in worse shape now than when the peace process began.

Someone needs to ask, what does the FARC gain from peace? The answer is -- nothing.

Currently, the FARC has an estimated income of \$100 million per month from facilitating narco-trafficking, kidnaping, and extortion. They have a demilitarized zone the size of Indiana where guerrilla-style cowardly attacks are planned and launched, and where attackers can vanish back into

oblivion. They have the Pastrana government exactly where they want it -- hunkered down absorbing repeated attacks, with little ability to respond. Clearly, the FARC has no incentive to reach peace, and Colombia has endured a year's worth of escalated violence to prove it.

Absent a peace strategy of its own, the U.S. State Department has blindly backed Pastrana's fledgling peace efforts. At Pastrana's request, American diplomats negotiated with and legitimized FARC leaders last December. This is the same FARC the State Department placed on its own list of world terrorist organizations. Despite this, one American diplomat continued contact with the FARC leaders even after the murder of the three Americans in March.

The lack of counter-narcotics strategy by the Clinton Administration has never been more evident than in Drug Czar Barry McCaffrey's \$1 billion aid package (this is less than one year's income for the FARC). This money targets the Colombian Army rampant with allegations of human rights abuses. In Colombia in 1997, General McCaffrey said he supported Black Hawk helicopters for the Colombian National Police. The CNP are world-renowned as the best counter-narcotics police in the world. However, days later in Washington, General McCaffrey opposed counter-narcotics aid to Colombia, the world's top drug-producing nation. He wrote that Black Hawks would "threaten to undermine the objectives of the United States international counterdrug policy." **[Mr. Chairman, I would like to enter General McCaffrey's October, 1997, letters into the record at this point.]** How could Black Hawk helicopters hurt our counterdrug effort? He then complained that Chairman Gilman and myself were trying to "micro-manage" the War on Drugs.

Simply put, there is no War on Drugs being waged by this administration -- unless you count the nearly \$200 million General McCaffrey spends annually for ONDCP television ads, and these frisbees and key chains up front on the easel. This is more than we spent on our counter-narcotics efforts in Colombia, the source of more than 80% of the cocaine and 75% of the heroin in the United States. Counter-narcotics aid to Colombia has been abysmally low, until this year -- when Chairman Gilman and I were successful at getting Black Hawks funded for the Colombian National Police. General McCaffrey should have been developing a heroin strategy, but the fact of the matter is, there has been no heroin strategy from this administration. The Republican Congress has been forced to do the administration's job -- and then fight to get the necessary equipment down there. **[Mr. Chairman I would like to enter several op-ed pieces into the record to clearly establish that Congress recognized the heroin problem several years ago, and has attempted to force a reluctant Clinton Administration to even address the issue.]**

General McCaffrey has just returned from Colombia, and surely he will present you with his firsthand account of the situation. News reports quote him as proposing a \$1 billion course of action which will help save Colombia from both the narco-traffickers and the FARC terrorists. \$1 billion is a lot of money, but it is less than the estimated \$1.2 billion the FARC takes in every year from drugs, kidnapping and extortion.

General McCaffrey's proposal undoubtedly includes funds to stand-up a Colombian Army capable of counter-narcotics operations, which sounds good on the surface. But given the tainted human rights record of the Colombian Army -- even in vetted units -- it is unlikely aid to them would pass the Administration's litmus test of "the spirit-of Leahy." This, of course, is the law named after the Senator from Vermont, prohibiting lethal assistance without cutting through a mountain of

bureaucratic red tape. This is the favorite first obstacle State usually places in front of any assistance to Colombia. The Colombian Army, while understandably a pet project for a former CINC SOUTHCOM, is in tatters, and even the Pentagon estimates it would take a Herculean effort and more than five years to vet, train, and equip, a Colombian Army capable of handling this mission. Regrettably, Colombia may not have five years of democracy left.

The good news is there is a group in Colombia who are already in place, are well-trained, and are willing to do what needs to be done to fight our war on drugs. They are the Colombian National Police (CNP), headed by legendary General Jose Serrano. In a poll in last week's Colombian newspaper, *El Tiempo*, Serrano's popularity (71%) is second only to the Catholic Church (77%). Colombians proudly say, "after my God...my General Serrano." General Serrano's men have a clean human rights record, and the desire to do the job right. All they need is the equipment.

Mr. Chairman, actions speak louder than words. This administration has promised Chairman Gilman and myself more than 40 new helicopters for the Colombian National Police since 1996. As of this morning, only two are on the flight line in Colombia. Why can't the State Department get these helicopters to General Serrano?

Mr. Chairman, out of curiosity, I checked with the Indiana Army National Guard. They have 32 Hueys and 7 Black Hawk helicopters. Today, General Serrano only has 23 operating helicopters to cover his entire country, where 95% of his missions require helicopters, the size of Texas and Kansas combined. **Before Congress embraces or considers General McCaffrey's \$1 billion aid package, shouldn't the administration be forced to make good on its commitments to General Serrano and the Congress regarding helicopters for the Colombian National Police?** Congress has many questions. But General Serrano has more than 4,000 questions, representing the lives of the men he has lost fighting our war on drugs.

The State Department's record on delivery of assistance to the CNP is abysmal at best. Even if we passed this proposal today, and worked every day for the next year, General McCaffrey knows there is no way that aid could reach Colombia next year, either due to incompetence, or a lack of will at the State Department. Clearly, this is an effort to say the Clinton Administration finally did something about drugs before next year's election cycle. It is coming way too late.

This chart shows the string of unkept promises by this administration. It could be much longer, but we chose only to highlight the helicopter situation. **[Mr. Chairman, I would like to insert this stack of unkept State Department promises, including dozens of letters on everything from ammunition, to weapons, to helicopters into the record at this point.]**

I will turn my attention to the State Department's insatiable desire to mislead Congress on what is actually happening in Colombia. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement has a history of incompetence and inability to deliver counter-narcotics assistance, which is its job.

Every new Assistant Secretary who comes in, Secretary Beers included, says they cannot be responsible for the actions of the previous secretary. Secretary Beers, the buck stops here. You have told me and my staff on a number of occasions that the first tranche of 35 new Huey II helicopters would be in Colombia last fall, then in March, then April, then June, then July. Now it's

August. When are they going to get there? I was told, by Ambassador Robert Gelbard, in September of 1996, that ten of these were going to be delivered. That was three years ago. There are only two on the flight line this morning. There have been four Huey II's ready for shipment from Alabama for a number of weeks now. Why haven't these Huey II's been delivered?.

Your department dropped the ball on this, and it isn't the first time. In June of last year you sold Mr. Hastert, Mr. Callahan, and Mr. Souder, on trading 3 Black Hawks for 6 Bell 212's and 10 Huey II helicopters. Chairman Gilman and myself reluctantly accepted your compromise because you gave us your word. Today, I am told by Narcotics Affairs Section personnel in Colombia, 4 of these 6 Bell 212's are not flying. Secretary Beers, despite your testimony at the International Relations Committee in March, they have never had more than 4 in the air at the same time. Chairman Gilman, I'm sure, remembers it very vividly as well. You told us, "Congressmen, I can assure you these will not be hangar queens."

Look at these photos. Look at the condition these helicopters were in when Secretary Beers gave them to the CNP. They have spent several million dollars to repair these aging helicopters. Further, INL got rid of these helicopters just before they are scheduled to go down again for six more months for their mandatory 5 year check-up. Will these piles of metal ever be of use to General Serrano?

General McCaffrey would have to rely on this same StateDepartment crowd to get his \$1 billion aid package delivered. By the time this assistance would arrive in Colombia, we would be trying to figure out who is going to be in the last helicopter off the roof of the American Embassy in Bogota.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I am glad Colombia is finally on the radar screen of this administration. Maybe someone at the White House will finally hear my pleas to get General Serrano the helicopters and equipment he needs. I just hope the 4,000 CNP officers have not died in vain, and that democracy will prevail.

DAN BURTON / BENJAMIN GILMAN



Heroin awakening

As the 105th Congress adjourned, the Republican Congress forced an ambivalent Clinton administration to confront America's heroin crisis.

Administration negotiators, including the drug czar Gen. Barry McCaffrey, reluctantly accepted the congressional proposal to increase the ability to eradicate and interdict in the source countries. Republicans in Congress have pressed Gen. McCaffrey and Madeleine Albright's State Department for more than a year to address this issue.

Pressure from Congress, which has oversight responsibility, was not enough. Neither were the facts, apparently, as the defiant Gen. McCaffrey and Mrs. Albright have alleged that Congress was "micromanaging" their floundering counter-narcotics program.

Heroin has become a crisis and the numbers are staggering. During Bill Clinton's beleaguered presidency, first-time heroin use by American teenagers (ages 12-17) has risen a mind-boggling 875 percent. While Gen. McCaffrey spent thousands of dollars on Frisbees and key chains, the overall percentage of past-month heroin use increased a numbing 378 percent. State Department ambivalence toward poppy eradication encouraged the narco-terrorists in Colombia to increase production from 6,000 to 9,000 hectares (roughly 22,500 acres, according to Colombian sources) over the last few years. All evidence of a distracted Clinton administration.

Colombian heroin is nearly 90 percent pure, making it even more addictive and lethal. At a purity level this high it can be snorted or smoked, and first-time users can become addicts from casual use. According to Thomas Constantine, Drug Enforcement Administration chief: "Today we are seeing 11th and 12th graders turning to heroin. These initiatives are . . . at the outset of a long, downward spiral into hard-core addiction or death."

Tragically, the Orlando, Fla., area has recently experienced 35 teenage heroin overdose deaths. Last year alone, Prince George's County, Md., had 42 heroin overdose deaths. In Baltimore, 40,000 heroin-addicts are paying drug dealers \$730 million a year for heroin (equivalent to the cost of 61 Black Hawk utility helicopters). Clearly, it is a deadly crisis affecting every community and every constituency in our nation.

Our source-country counter-narcotics effort still pales in comparison to the \$16 billion-plus budgeted for domestic counter-narcotics programs — some of which are beneficial. Until Republicans stepped in, Gen. McCaffrey's domestic advertising campaign commanded more money than America's entire counter-narcotics effort in Colombia — the source-country of more than 80 percent of the world's cocaine supply and more than 75 percent of the heroin seized

on American streets and schools. Gen. McCaffrey and Mrs. Albright still contend the best place to fight illicit drugs is at home. The DEA, FBI, U.S. Customs, thousands of local, state and federal police officers, and many in Congress contend the place to stop illegal narcotics is at the source — period. Once it enters the stream of commerce, it is virtually impossible to interdict.

Heroin does not come in large shipments. It is nearly impossible to detect inside hollowed suitcases, in the heels of shoes, and in some cases in human "mules." The place to stop the heroin is in the poppy fields of the Colombian Andes. Heroin production is different from traditional cocaine production, making it more difficult to disrupt. Heroin production requires only small amounts of precursor chemicals, and it is forcibly produced by peasant farmers, not in traditional large cocaine-type laboratories that can be attacked and destroyed.

Customs agents at the Port of Miami informed congressional investigators that it seizes less than 10 percent of the drugs coming through America's second-busiest seaport. This means more than 90 percent makes it into the stream of commerce.

A senior FBI official recently told congressional investigators, "Eradication of the opium poppy in South America seems to be the logical point of attack in order to curb the increasing flow of Colombian heroin into the growing northeast market. . . . You know, if we could fight it at the source it would be better."

Republicans specifically earmarked the source country funds from the budget agreement to address the heroin problem. This included funding for six high-altitude-capable Black Hawk utility helicopters for the Colombian National Police's (CNP) world-renowned anti-narcotics unit, the DANTI. Finally, the CNP will be able to reach the poppy fields to eradicate what the Colombians call "the devil's flower" before it unleashes its hell on American children.

Ultimately, Gen. McCaffrey begrudgingly signed off on the agreement and proceeded to arrogantly trumpet his "support" for this package. Privately, Gen. McCaffrey was seething about his surrender. Gen. Jose Serrano, who has lost 4,000 Colombian cops fighting our War on Drugs, knows Republicans have been his ally in Washington, fighting for years to get the CNP more assistance.

The American people deserve to know the truth about these issues as well.

Rep. Dan Burton, Indiana Republican, is chairman of the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee. Rep. Benjamin A. Gilman, New York Republican, is chairman of the House International Relations Committee.

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COMMENTARY

DAN BURTON / BEN GILMAN / DENNIS HASTERT / CASS BALLENGER

Perilous situation in Colombia

The question is: What can be done to save Colombia's democracy? There is no short answer to that question, but what can be definitively stated is that the national security of the United States is at grave risk if democracy falls in Colombia. The costs of stabilizing and returning Colombia to a democracy will be enormous in dollars — as well as in lives.

However, we can start by showing some real leaders and from the president's ideas to an Embassy in Bogotá. Second, the president should provide a national interest waiver so we can provide more and greater assistance to the CNP, which is fighting the War on Drugs in the largest source country in the world.

Will these things save democracy in Colombia? Not by themselves. But they are simple steps in the right direction. The national security of the United States and democracy in Colombia hang in the balance. Something must be done now before it's too late.

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less disease, adapts to its new surroundings, and therefore has multiplied to splinter into dozens of much smaller organizations. Out of necessity, they have formed lucrative and stable alliances with the FARC and ELN for protection, cultivation, and distribution of their vast narcotics network. They have also branched into heroin production.

This new influx of pure Colombian heroin and the astonishing statistics showing more than 141,000 new American heroin users — and there is no such thing as casual heroin use — in one recent year, and a historic level of heroin use by our teen-agers, should be treated for what they are: an epidemic waiting to explode which threatens our vital national interest. The administration must do something, or we may lose an entire generation of American youngsters.

It is fairly obvious that U.S. policy toward Colombia has not been successful during this administration. The decision to decertify Colombia twice for not cooperating in the fight against drugs (without providing a national interest waiver) is one of the reasons Colombia's democracy is at risk. There needs to be accountability on the part of Colombian politicians and the U.S. Secretary of State. My colleague, Sen. Patrick Leahy, asked twice to testify before a joint congressional committee dealing on the topic. She has yet to respond.

As recent events have shown, the FARC and ELN terrorists are more than willing to flex their muscles. In the weeks leading up to the recent municipal elections, the terrorists killed more than 200 Colombian National Police (CNP) officers, and caused more than 1,000 candidates to withdraw from the elections.

astounding when it is noted there have never been any accusations of CNP's DANIT and more than 3,000 officers being killed over the past few years. These are good men leading an incorruptible group of loyal young officers. They deserve our government's and people's support.

The current political situation in Latin America's oldest democracy is unsettling at best.

Few people understand the political reality in the country better than for drugs, coffee, emeralds, and decades of guerrilla violence. The reality is quite simple: Democracy in Colombia is dangerously close to reaching a crossroads. The Clinton administration has not done enough to get the lights go on. For decades there has been a terrorist element in Colombia. Groups such as the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC) and National Liberation Army (ELN) have claimed to be ideological rebel organizations fighting the oppression of capitalism. Their claims would not be farther from the truth. These groups are nothing more than well-financed terrorist organizations, as evidenced by their official designation as foreign terrorist organizations by the U.S. Department of State on Oct. 8. They gain their enormous wealth through military alliances with the narco-traffickers, through ransoms gained through kidnapping, and through extortion from out of Gas companies. The price of a barrel of oil is estimated to be at least \$60 million per barrel, and more than \$1 billion per barrel altogether.

Make no mistake, this is not a war of malnourished simpletons and of muzzy hunter rifles. These are some of the most well-trained, well-armed, and well-fed terrorists anywhere in the world. With assist-

tance from the most unlikely of sources — Russian organized crime syndicates who facilitate arms-for-drugs transactions — they have armed themselves to the hilt. The FARC and ELN terrorists buy the latest weaponry and the cutting-edge communications equipment, complex communications equipment, surface-to-air missiles, machine guns, and ample supplies and varieties of ammunition and explosives.

As recent events have shown, the FARC and ELN terrorists are more than willing to flex their muscles. In the weeks leading up to the recent municipal elections, the terrorists killed more than 200 Colombian National Police (CNP) officers, and caused more than 1,000 candidates to withdraw from the elections through violent intimidation, and brazenly kidnapped two Organization of American States election observers.

The overwhelming variable in any discussion about Colombia, sadly, is narco-traffickers. The Cali and Medellin cartels are no longer the same due to the leadership of the CNP's Gen. Luis Serrano CNP Col. Leonardo Gallo. The CNP shut down the operations of the major cartels, placing their leaders in custody, and destroying much of their networking infrastructure. Messers. Serrano's and Gallo's accomplishment is even more

DAN BURTON / BEN GILMAN / J.DENNIS HASTERI

The Clinton administration and the Justice Department are doing everything possible to stop the flow of illegal drugs into America — right? Not so. Here is a specific example of how bureaucratic bungling at the Justice Department is keeping some much needed equipment from reaching those who need it most and are in the best position to prevent drugs from entering our streets and schoolyards. A simple opportunity to make a dramatic difference in the War on Drugs — squandered thus far.

Over the last two years, the Justice Department has had in its possession two DC-3 aircraft seized from narco-traffickers. For the past two years, members of Congress and the State Department have asked to have the DC-3s transferred to its International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau (INL) to be used in counter-narcotics operations in Colombia, the source of 80 percent of the world's cocaine and 60 percent of the heroin seized in the United States.

The DC-3 is a 1950s vintage airplane which has little monetary value and is rarely seen in the United States. It is, however, perfectly suited for counter-narcotics operations in Colombia. It has the capability and durability to utilize dirt, grass, or paved runways of almost

Sacrificed air arm in the war on drugs?

any length. It can carry personnel or cargo including herbicides used to eradicate coca and opium poppy into remote jungle landing areas which are scattered over the Colombian countryside. In short, it is a reliable aircraft which is fairly simple to maintain.

Despite the State Department's repeated requests for the aircraft to be transferred, the Justice Department has already auctioned off one plane. The \$1.2 million which Justice received for the plane is minuscule compared to the operational value it would have had fighting the War on Drugs at its source.

Currently, our ally in the War on Drugs, the Colombian National Police (CNP), who are almost single-handedly fighting the narco-terrorists and traffickers in Colombia, have two DC-3s. These two DC-3s fly more than 100 missions per month supporting counter-narcotic operations of the CNP. According to the State Department, the DC-3s are the backbone of the CNP. One of these DC-3s was recently attacked by narco-terrorists, yet

our communities. The jobs of local, state, and federal police officers all around the country would be made a lot easier if less deadly heroine and cocaine was coming from Colombia.

Due to U.S. law, while Colombia is decertified (a decision the Clinton administration will revisit in the coming weeks), the DC-3 cannot be given directly to the CNP. However, through the State Department's INL, the plane could be leased to the CNP, or flown by U.S.-contracted pilots. The attorney general has the discretion to make the transfer. At this point, though, the Justice Department has done nothing but impede and ignore the repeated attempts in the Congress and by the State Department to obtain this plane. It is shameful to see the rampant lack of concern for fighting the War on Drugs in this administration.

The CNP is not short on desire, it is, however, short on equipment. The CNP has maximized its counter-narcotics operations with the amount of equipment it has. After more than two years of arm-twisting by those of us on front lines of the War on Drugs in Congress, the Clinton administration finally released a dozen antiquated and battered Vietnam-era UH-1H Huey helicopters to the CNP in early 1997.

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Within two days after receiving these helicopters, the CNP captured the largest cocaine lab in the world, netting 13.8 tons of cocaine, worth more than \$1 billion, and the lab itself capable of producing 300 tons of cocaine per year. In short, when the CNP gets assistance, even old outdated equipment, they get the maximum results.

This is not a tough decision. The cost to taxpayers is minimal. It is a simple opportunity to have a dramatic impact in the War on Drugs. This modest transfer would provide a one-third increase to the number of counter-narcotics missions each month in Colombia — the No. 1 source country in our hemisphere. If the Clinton administration cannot handle simple decisions like this, how will we ever be able to truly win the War on Drugs?

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Put some teeth in the war on drugs

U.S. Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ind., is chairman of the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee. Rep. Ron Givens, R-N.J., is chairman of the International Relations Committee; and Rep. J. Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., is chairman of the Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on National Security.

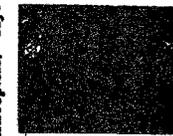
RECENTLY congressional investigators were sent to Bogota to assess current U.S. counter-narcotics efforts and policies. Their findings are very disturbing.

The State Department literally has surrendered to the narco-terrorists in the war against drugs in Colombia, the source of most of the world's cocaine supply and more than 60 percent of the heroin seized on U.S. streets.

Despite specific support from Congress, the State Department has slashed the counter-narcotics budget in Colombia, amounting to \$12 million annually. As a result, program officers at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota are planning a

massive cutback in eradication programs, necessitating the grounding of at least 20 of the Colombian National Police's 37 aging UH-1H Huey helicopters, as well as their entire fixed-wing fleet.

"More than 90 percent of our counter-narcotics missions rely solely on air support, particularly helicopters," says Jose Serrano, director general of the Colombian National Police. While congressional investigators were in Bogota, the Colombian police captured two tons of cocaine in Medellin and another 30 kilograms in Cartagena.

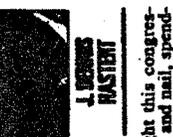


Both loads were destined for American streets, where drug dealers would have sold in at least \$93 million. Worse, Colombia's coca production has risen significantly over the last year. It is now the world's top cocaine-production country. Although only two years ago Colombia's heroin has dominated street sales in the United States.

The best place and most cost-

effective way of stopping the flow of these drugs is at their source, but the State Department haphazardly has slashed counter-narcotics assistance to Colombia.

The U.S. Congress proposed, and President Clinton signed, a law that we provide the Colombian National Police with three UH-60 Blackhawk utility helicopters for drug-eradication purposes. The State Department has fought this congressional initiative tooth and nail, spending more time trying to circumvent the law than it has spent fighting narco-terrorists.



This is not a wrestling match; it is the law. Congress's approach is clear and simple: Increase funding targeted for the State Department's counter-narcotics program — by 100 percent since 1994; provide three Blackhawk utility helicopters and more and better training; and create a counter-narcotics strategy to combat the opium problem, used in planting heroin, in the Colombian Andes.

The State Department's response: Cut funding and support for eradication programs in Colombia and fight the direction of Congress. Why?

The blame cannot be solely with the U.S. Embassy in Bogota. It takes direction from the State Department in Washington. Regrettably, the Clinton administration has not filled the job of assistant secretary for international narcotics and law enforcement. The post has been vacant for almost a year. The acting deputies and executive director have all left, too.

Congress understands that the U.S. counter-narcotics policy in Colombia affects our kids, our streets and our neighborhoods in every American town. This drug scourge is devastating our society at an alarming rate (141,000 new heroin users in one recent year, and historic levels of heroin use by our teenagers from 12 to 17).

What can be done? The answer does not rely solely on the expensive quick-fix ad campaign being run by the drug czar's office. It requires a comprehensive plan with some teeth. The mounting evidence suggests very clearly that the President and our country of origin need to be held accountable for their actions and more important, the inaction of the State Department.

DAN BURTON / CASS BALLENGER

Dubious record in the war on drugs

When Secretary of State Madeleine Albright came before the House International Relations Committee on Feb. 12 to submit her 1999 budget request for the State Department, she was asked some very tough questions about the War on Drugs. This is an issue which threatens our national security as well as the youngsters in every neighborhood in every Congressional district.

Mrs. Albright was asked specific questions about the State Department's abysmal performance in the War on Drugs in Colombia, the world's new leader in coca production, and the source of 65 percent of the deadly heroin seized on U.S. streets and schoolyards. She was short on answers, and sat stunned, silent and stoic as question after question was raised regarding the incompetence at the American Embassy in Bogota and the lack of assistance to our allies, the Colombian National Police's (CNP's) elite anti-narcotics unit, the DANTI.

Three CNP officers happened to be in the hearing audience, which was open to the public. They proudly stood to attention when they were recognized and cited for valor by the Congress. This clearly put a human face on the 4,000 CNP officers who have been butchered over the last nine years by the better-armed and better-equipped narco-guerrillas. The site of these three brave police officers sent chills down the spines of everyone in the room because it was readily apparent that the Clinton administration has left the CNP hanging in the wind with hollow promises.

Retribution was swift. After the American Embassy in Bogota received a phone call from an angered State Department official, it in turn read the riot act to the CNP officers who attended the public hearing. It is no wonder that two senior law enforcement officials, one American and one Colombian, recently told congressional investigators they are more afraid of the American Embassy in Bogota and the U.S. government than they are of the narco-traffickers.

There are a plethora of cases identifying dereliction of duty at worse, and incompetence at best, by the State Department's International

Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau (INL), or counter-narcotics division. Here are just two examples.

Beginning in September 1996, the State Department has continually promised members of the International Relations Committee that helicopter upgrades would be provided to give the CNP's antiquated Vietnam-era UH-1H Huey

Three CNP officers happened to be in the hearing audience, which was open to the public. They proudly stood to attention when they were recognized and cited for valor by the Congress.

helicopter fleet the ability to have greater range to reach the outlying coca-growing regions and better altitude lift capability to reach the high-altitude opium poppy growing regions. Due to Colombia's geography and vast expanse, 90 percent of the CNP's operations are airborne. To date, not one helicopter upgrade has been performed and none are scheduled. Since 1994, Congress has increased State's INL budget by 109 percent.

Despite this huge increase, the State Department has failed to follow through with its promises to Congress. In an effort to assure it would be done this year, Congress specifically provided funds and then earmarked those funds in State's INL budget to perform these upgrades and buy three new Black Hawk utility helicopters for the CNP.

This became law the moment the president signed the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill last year. If the president and his administration were opposed to this, he could have used his line-item veto. He did not. Despite having this specific direction, the State Department and the American Embassy in Bogota seem devoted to evading

this law rather than following it.

In July 1997, the Acting Undersecretary of INL and her deputy (the Clinton administration has left these important permanent spots vacant for a year now) testified at a Government Reform National Security Subcommittee hearing that the delivery of defensive rapid-fire mini-guns, needed by both the CNP and INL — to protect U.S. assets, our allies in the CNP, and on occasion American DEA agents — would be administered quickly.

This was not the first time Congress had heard this. State's INL had been telling members of the International Relations Committee for more than a year that the mini-guns were on their way to Colombia.

In November 1997, Embassy Bogota sent a list of the needed mini-gun parts to get 17 guns working to State's INL; the embassy never got a response. In July, there were six mini-guns working. Right now, after several hundred more CNP officers have been killed and one helicopter shot down, there are still only six mini-guns working.

Evidently INL does not take its mission seriously. As a result, it may be time to move the INL account from the State Department to another agency or department. Move it to an agency willing to take its mission, protect our vital national interests and kids, as well as take congressional direction and oversight seriously.

Congress should hold oversight hearings on this topic. The administration's complacency with regard to filling rampant INL vacancies and INL's inability to accomplish its mission, justify compelling the Secretary of State to testify at a congressional hearing again very soon.

Last month's decertification announcement included a national interest waiver for Colombia, permitting some vital assistance to reach our CNP allies. This was a step in the right direction, however there is still a prevailing reluctance by the administration, the drug czar's office, and the State Department to address a real War on Drugs.

Congress dem.nds and the American people deserve answers — now — before it is too late.

Rep. Dan Burton, Indiana Republican, is chairman of the Government Reform and Oversight Committee, and sits on the International Relations Committee. Rep. Cass Ballenger, North Carolina Republican, is vice chairman of the International Relations Western Hemisphere Subcommittee.

DAN BURTON / J. DENNIS HASTERI

Unfulfilled drug war promises

ception has become an art form for the Clinton administration, and it appears its State Department has been taking copious notes. It is clear to Congress that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's agency cannot keep its word. Time and time again, both written and oral agreements with Congress have been tossed aside with reckless abandon. Just as the credibility of President Clinton has come into question numerous times over his tenure in office, the credibility of Foggy Bottom has become completely lost. This has become Mrs. Albright's scarlet letter, threatening to taint her legacy as secretary of state.

Currently, the State Department is charged with addressing the source-country eradication and counter-narcotics efforts. Colombia is the key source nation for both the cocaine and heroin we see flooding American streets and schoolyards. Heroin use has become an epidemic in almost every town, big or small, in our country. It is cheaper, purer, and easier to get than ever before. There have been 35 teen-age heroin overdose deaths in the Orlando, Fla. area alone in the last two years. The State Department is failing in this area. Worse than the failure is

the lack of will to even consider the problem and possible solutions. It is time for Congress to restructure the War on Drugs and shift some responsibility from the incompetent State Department to other agencies, as proposed in H.R. 4360, The Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act. The Republican Congress has outlined an initial strategy to stop heroin at the source, before it reaches American shores. The bottom line is, the State Department has no plan, and has spent countless hours attempting to evade the will and direction of Congress instead of actually implementing policies, producing nothing but hollow promises.

The results of the continual empty rhetoric are staggering. Twenty thousand Americans die from drugs and drug-related violence each year. More than 4,000 of our allies in the Colombian National Police (CNP) have died fighting our War on Drugs. Many died waiting on the delivery of equipment promised by the Clinton State Department, the lack of which has also resulted in a 50 percent reduction in opium eradication missions by the CNP. The only reason

The results of the continual empty rhetoric are staggering.

dry equipment has been delivered is due to congressional pressure. It apparently has not been enough. Consider the following: In September 1996, the State Department, in a letter to Congress, promised delivery of 12 upgraded Vietnam-era Huey helicopters. It is now August 1998, and not one of these helicopters has been delivered.

Earlier this year, State again promised the delivery of the same helicopters, starting in October. Congress has since learned delivery will now be delayed again, until 1999 at the earliest.

Congress was able to direct an aircraft seized from drug smugglers to the State Department for use in counter-narcotics operations in Colombia. It took more than three years to complete the deal, and State

knew the reason. Congress intervened was to bolster the CNP air wing, yet State sent the aircraft to Guatemala for its maiden deployment. Congress, attempting to increase CNP counter-narcotics operations, appropriated \$36 million for three Black Hawk utility helicopters. State disagreed with Congress, and produced a reimbursement request to use the money elsewhere. Congress placed a hold on that request. State then negotiated a compromise, which included sending six lesser helicopters to Colombia. However, State did not have access to the helicopters it promised to deliver, creating the impression that State may have intentionally misled Members of Congress. Eerily similar to 1996, State has told Congress it will deliver similar helicopters from the commercial market by October. We'll believe it when the helicopters are on the tarmac in Bogota.

A recent remark by a high-ranking political appointee underscores the lack of respect that the unchecked rampant bureaucracy at the State Department has shown

to Congress. "It was only a Sense of Congress Resolution. It doesn't mean anything," referring to a unanimous resolution supporting the delivery of three Black Hawk utility helicopters to the CNP for counter-narcotics missions. Despite a congressional inquiry, Mrs. Albright did nothing to reel in this renegade appointee. It is easy to see why Congress, and the American people take anything that comes from the Clinton administration with a grain of salt. It is impossible to determine if what is said is actually the truth. Recent history has shown the Clinton State Department has a severe credibility problem. Secretary Albright should resign in those responsible, because — even in Washington — you are only as good as your word.

Rep. Dan Burton, Indiana Republican, is chairman of the Government Reform and Oversight Committee, and is a senior member of the International Relations Committee. Rep. J. Dennis Hastert, Illinois Republican, is chairman of the Government Reform's National Security Subcommittee, chairman of the Speaker's Task Force for a Drug Free America, and is chief deputy whip.

DAN BURTON

Negotiating with hidden terrors

Two recent policy shifts in the Western Hemisphere by the Clinton administration have raised questions about America's commitment to the war on drugs. First, the Clinton-Albright State Department attempted to squelch the Clinton-Albright State Department's support for distribution in Cuba because the drugs were being shipped to Cuba for distribution in the United States. Second, Clinton's rate in drug-trafficking would have caused serious embarras in the administration's internationalization efforts.

Second, despite an October 1997 State Department policy of not negotiating with the Cuban government, the Clinton-Albright State Department's policy of not negotiating with the Cuban government. Although it ordered two

These facts are intertwined in a manner worthy of a Dan Quayle

Last December, the Clinton-Albright State Department's policy of not negotiating with the Cuban government. Although it ordered two

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drug-trafficking in order to counter the Western Hemisphere by the Clinton-Albright State Department raise questions about America's commitment to the war on drugs. First, the Clinton-Albright State Department attempted to squelch the Clinton-Albright State Department's support for distribution in Cuba because the drugs were being shipped to Cuba for distribution in the United States. Second, Clinton's rate in drug-trafficking would have caused serious embarras in the administration's internationalization efforts.

The Clinton administration's policies in the Western Hemisphere have been a drift for some time.

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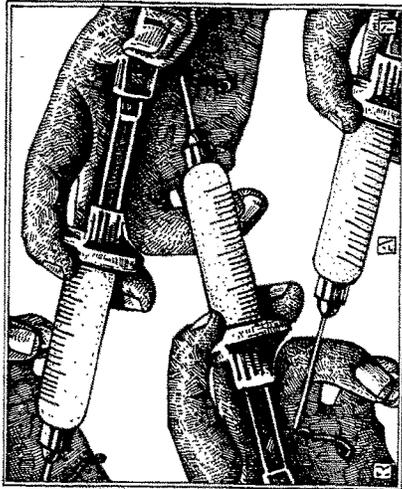


Illustration by Robert R. McElroy. © 1998, The Washington Times

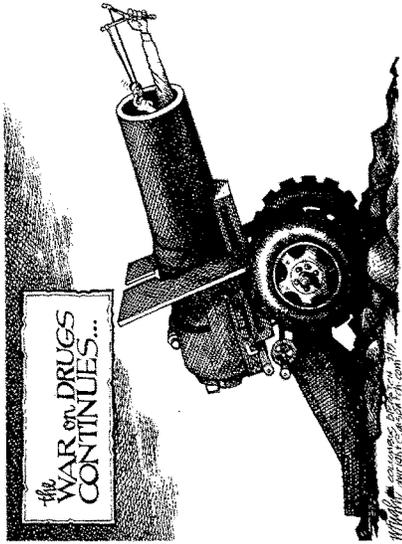
the best-equipped and most-organized in the Western Hemisphere, numbering more than 100,000, with an annual drug output of 100,000 metric tons. Although specific details of the Clinton administration's counterintelligence operations in Colombia are classified, the Clinton administration contends, these were counterintelligence operations. After getting caught with their hand in the cookie jar, Clinton administration officials have instead of embracing the truth about the drug trade in Colombia, they have been hiding behind semantics and euphemisms. Clinton administration officials have been hiding behind semantics and euphemisms. Clinton administration officials have been hiding behind semantics and euphemisms.

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DAN BURTON / BENJAMIN GILMAN

Drug war disarray up close

The WAR ON DRUGS CONTINUES...



of these helicopters (worth \$10 million each) not shot down nearly half their missions drew hostile fire. INL and Coast Guard pilots had a minimum of 10,000 flight hours each, were all 20-plus years old and awaiting annual maintenance if and when spare parts have been available. Clearly, Congress was led to believe that the helicopters would play a major role in a concerted effort to eradicate opium poppy.

Committee investigators requested more disturbing information. The CNP's fleet of aging Hueys and Bell 212 helicopters has only 14 out of 39 being "Additional" level of the

you, will not be hangar queens." Last month, committee investigators found four of the six Bell 212s in the inventory of the CNP. Mr. Beers' promise, the helicopters had a minimum of 10,000 flight hours each, were all 20-plus years old and awaiting annual maintenance if and when spare parts have been available. Clearly, Congress was led to believe that the helicopters would play a major role in a concerted effort to eradicate opium poppy.

Committee investigators requested more disturbing information. The CNP's fleet of aging Hueys and Bell 212 helicopters has only 14 out of 39 being "Additional" level of the

CNP's only three, larger, and down with engine problems. More than 90 percent of the CNP's counter-narcotics missions are flown by the smaller Hueys. Officers in Colombia have their largest budget ever, yet CNP operations are virtually grounded the world over. The CNP is wasting the white flag in our war on drugs in Colombia.

There are just a few reasons why it makes sense to move the mission of INL to another agency, such as the Defense Department or the State Department. Drug Enforcement Administration for smaller, law-enforcement-related efforts. This would provide for a more focused and professionalized training in military procurement and analysis would be responsible for an area they have not traditionally worked and been trained in.

Predictably, an embarrassed INL program office in Bogota has been unable to provide any information about the audit. They claim Congress wants to cut anti-narcotics aid to the CNP. Nothing could be further from the truth. The audit is the largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid (almost exclusively counter-narcotics funding for the CNP) in the world. In the last two years, Congress has exceeded the INL budget requests for Colombia and has carried out a major effort to stop drugs at the source.

Despite stark rhetoric in the past, the CNP has provided the assistance and provided a reduction in the use of force. The American people need to know that too.

Rep. Dan Burton, Indiana Republican, is chairman of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Rep. Benjamin Gilman, New York Republican, is chairman of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Proliferation, and Political Asylum.

We asked the State Department inspector general to conduct an audit of the agency's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), currently responsible for U.S. counter-narcotics assistance overseas, because it continually displays incompetence and has often misled Congress. The mission may need to be reassigned.

INL program officers, who frequently come from unrelated positions such as a visa officer or education officer, receive only a few weeks of on-the-job training, according to the testimony of Ronny Beers, the assistant secretary for international security. The bureau requires intimate knowledge of law and procedures. INL's Cuban operations require a team that spends months hiding behind semantics and broad interpretations of Congressional authority rather than delivering the assistance.

Lack of adequate training is a schoolteacher to submit Defense Department requisition forms for a shipment of 7.62mm ammunition. The INL's Cuban operations require a team that spends months hiding behind semantics and broad interpretations of Congressional authority rather than delivering the assistance.

More than 90 percent of the CNP's counter-narcotics missions rely on air support. dollars, plans to arm the U.S.-provided helicopters with 1966 decontaminated fuel. The CNP has no available spare parts and have no available spare parts supply. However, the CNP has requested modern mini-guns, communications equipment, and other equipment to provide the best protection for their officers and the U.S. taxpayers-financed helicopters. "should" any

Don't legitimize terrorist groups



U.S. Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ind., above, is chairman of the House Government Reform

Committee. Rep. Benjamin

Gilman, R-N.J., below, is

chairman of the International

Relations Committee.



tragically, three kidnapped Americans were brutally executed this month by the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC). Their bullet-ridden bodies were found in Venezuela.

Last December Secretary of State Madeleine Albright dispatched two midlevel diplomats "to meet" secretly with the FARC. Now it has delivered a very blunt response to the United States and Colombia on the deteriorating peace process.

At the highest levels, the Clinton-Albright State Department signed off on negotiating with the FARC, though the State Department designates it a terrorist organization. And the United States was the only country to send an ambassador (other countries that attended sent low-level representatives) to the first sit-down negotiation between FARC and the Colombian government. When U.S. officials meet with terrorists, it sends confusing signals to both friend and foe alike.

Colombia, Latin America's oldest democracy, has been embroiled in a bitter civil conflict that has spanned four decades and cost nearly 40,000 lives. The new president, Andres Pastrana, has tried to meet the FARC terrorists more than halfway. Regrettably, he is dealing from a weak position with a narco-terrorist organization that is better armed and trained and financed by millions in illicit drugs. He has ceded an area of his country

the size of Indiana to the control of FARC, labeling it a demilitarized zone. The Colombian National Police cannot conduct counternarcotics operations in this "off-limits" region, which is home to several major cocaine-producing laboratories, clandestine airstrips and more than 30,000 acres of coca crops.

The FARC makes money protecting narco-traffickers. It pulls in more than \$1 billion annually from narco-traffickers and its other illicit businesses, extortion and kidnaping for ransom. Since 1993 at least 18 Americans have been kidnapped. Eight have been murdered.

This is obviously a terrorist group and the State Department should not negotiate with it.

A phone intercept by the Colombian military identified the FARC's German Briceño Suarez, brigade commander of the 45th and 10th FARC fronts and the brother of FARC Commandante Jorge Briceño, as having made the following statement to a subcommandant: "Hey, brother, I thought all three were guys . . . But, son of a bitch, let that bitch die . . . she wasn't part of our family. Take them to the other side of the river and blow them away."

If this intercept is accurate, the FBI, which has extra-territorial jurisdiction in such cases, ought to be taking any and all measures to indict the FARC leadership and those who pulled the trig-

gers. We have asked FBI Director Louis Freeh to do just that.

These recent deaths are reminders that the FARC has held three other Americans hostage since January 1993. They are Dave Mankins, Mark Rich and Rick Tenenoff, the longest-held American hostages in the world. Congressional calls for the State Department to do something about these hostages were falling on deaf ears until Secretary Albright shamelessly used them to justify the December meeting with the FARC.

So far, human-rights organizations have not denounced the FARC for its brutal atrocities. However, we have asked them to join us in requesting the FARC to release all American hostages and the 136 Colombian police officers, whose mission is counternarcotics, not counternarcotics.

Those in the State Department who blurred the longstanding U.S. policy of not dealing with terrorists have — unfortunately — legitimized the FARC and undermined the Colombian peace process. They should be held accountable. The executions of three Americans should serve as a wake-up call to the United States. The Clinton administration should end the confusion created and reestablish a clear and unequivocal policy of refusing to deal with terrorists, especially those who wantonly murder Americans abroad.

DAN BURTON/BENJAMIN GILMAN/CASS BALLENGER

Unlike the now-famous Pvt. Ryan, Gen. Russo Jose Serrano is not a name most Americans will recognize. However, those of us who follow the war on drugs know him well. Gen. Serrano is the undisputed hero of that war.

Gen. Serrano has risen through the ranks of the Colombian National Police to become its highest ranking officer, the director general. Gen. Serrano has headed DANTE, the CNP's elite, world-renowned, anti-narcotics unit, which dismantled the Cali and Medellin cartels during the 1980s. He led the successful capture of notorious the Medellin cartel kingpin, Pablo Escobar. Gen. Serrano has survived a plethora of death threats and more than 40 assassination attempts.

One obstacle Gen. Serrano faces in the fight against narco-traffickers is the lack of equipment. The Clinton/Albright State Department has made countless hollow promises to provide equipment to Gen. Serrano's CNP for use in counter-narcotics operations. Many of those promises were made personally to Gen. Serrano by State Department officials or U.S. Embassy personnel in Bogota. Gen. Serrano made a mistake. He took the Clinton/Albright State Department at its word.

As a result of the Clinton/Albright State Department not keeping its word, the negative impact on Gen. Serrano has been immeasurable. Gen. Serrano, counting on promised assistance, has submitted budget requests and set operational goals. He staked his reputation within the Colombian government on the State Department's promises. Unfairly, this hero

Saving Gen. Serrano

has been labeled by some in Colombia as *terro de los gringos*, or puppet of the Americans. His image in Colombia has suffered because of the State Department's lack of integrity. Consider the following.

During a congressional hearing, followed by a letter in September 1996, the State Department

As a result of the Clinton/Albright State Department not keeping its word, the negative impact on Gen. Serrano has been immeasurable.

promised to deliver 12 upgraded Huey helicopters to the CNP. Two years later, those helicopters still have not been delivered, and the CNP has lost 12 Vietnam-era helicopters in counternarcotics missions — a net deficit of 24 helicopters (nearly double the CNP's helicopter wing). This is critical because 90 percent of Gen. Serrano's counternarcotics missions rely

on helicopter support. The formula is simple: More helicopters mean increased missions and less drugs on American streets.

In a June 18 letter to Gen. Serrano, the State Department promised three high-altitude-capable Bell 212 helicopters within 30 to 60 days. On June 17, Congress was made a similar promise (three in 60 days and three more by the end of the year).

In an attempt to quell mounting congressional displeasure, the State Department's shell game began by merely slapping a new coat of paint on one of its own Bell 212s and moving it to the CNP's side of the tarmac in Colombia on Aug. 29 — 12 days late and two helicopters short of its promise.

We are now beyond 90 days and still counting, and there are no more helicopters in Colombia than there were three months ago. Gen. Serrano is still awaiting the delivery of the five additional Bell 212s and 10 Huey IIs.

While the State Department chooses to engage in empty rhetoric, nearly 29,000 Americans die from drug-related deaths each year. There is a mind-boggling 378 percent increase in the use of pure Colombian heroin on American streets and school yards, a 27 percent increase in drug use among 12-17 year olds, and 78 percent of American students report that drugs are bought, sold or used in their high schools.

While the State Department has put source-country efforts on hold, Congress has taken action. Congress has passed H.R. 4300, the Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act, which includes funding for six Black Hawk utility helicopters and 50 upgraded Huey II helicopters for the CNP.

The counternarcotics program of Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright's department suffers from a lack of credibility. It has not owned up to its commitments to Congress or to our allies in the war on drugs. It is time to shift some of the State Department's counternarcotics responsibilities to other agencies. It is a necessary first step for a failing counternarcotics program tainted by an absence of accountability, wrought with failures and empty promises, and saturated with mismanagement and incompetence.

Saving Gen. Serrano and his brave CNP officers is an elementary first step to stopping the flow of illegal narcotics onto the streets and into the schools in every congressional district in America. Although its performance shows otherwise, the State Department contends its intentions are good. Regrettably, good intentions will not stop drugs from killing American children, and good intentions have not saved the lives of 4,000 of Gen. Serrano's officers.

Mme. Secretary, we cannot conduct our war on drugs with good intentions. Remember, good intentions didn't save Pvt. Ryan — actions did.

Rep. Dan Burton, Indiana Republican, is chairman of the Government Reform and Oversight Committee. Rep. Ben Gilman, New York Republican, is chairman of the International Relations Committee. Rep. Cass Ballenger, North Carolina Republican, is vice chairman of the Western Hemisphere subcommittee.

The Washington Times

COMMENTARY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1998



DAN BURTON / BEN GILMAN / J. DENNIS HASTERI

ately has a domestic crisis been so closely linked to foreign policy as is the case with drugs and drug-related violence. Nearly 90 percent of all drug seizures are the result of street seizures are the purest form of Colombian heroin. This is a crisis of epidemic proportions, and so far the Clinton administration has been purely rhetorical.

Tough talk and a successive string of baffling foreign policy decisions. The two-year decertification of Colombia as a partner in the War on Drugs, the withdrawal of U.S. troops whose drug czar was jailed for drug-related corruption, and the molasses approach to granting a limited 614 presidential waiver, providing critical assistance to fight the War on Drugs, all show examples of the bizarre foreign policy administered by the Clinton State Department, including our U.S. ambassador to Colombia.

30,000 Americans died last year from drugs and drug-related violence who are in the jungles valiantly fighting the War on Drugs. Certification assistance does not go to the politicians who are the real beneficiaries. Thus, this administration is weakening our last best hope to rid American streets and schools of this infectious scourge.

By decertifying Colombia and failing to provide a national interest waiver — which they could still provide — the administration has added further evidence of an abysmal record in our War on Drugs. It's shameful that we are offering little more than rhetorical support for Colombia's democracy and the national security of the United States hang in the balance.

than two weeks' ammunition. They must spend at least \$100,000 on each UH-1H Huey helicopter, U.S. Vietnam relics, provided for eradication missions, to get them in the air safely. The birds lack adequate maintenance and spare parts. Clinton guns the Clinton administration has repeatedly promised, yet failed to provide, for more than three years.

As a result, they are like ducks in a pond, vulnerable to attack by themselves, suffering damage from well-armed narco-guerrilla gunfire on almost every mission. Eight helicopters have been shot down and 18 months we damaged in the past year.

His decision was based on suspected corruption within the highest levels of the Colombian political system. However, by decertifying a country about a national interest waiver, the U.S. has demonstrated the use of funds for host-nation counterintelligence operations. By doing this for two consecutive years in Colombia, the administration has demonstrated that American children, it has effectively demoralized young Colombian soldiers and police officers in body bags. More than 3,500 Colombian National Guardsmen have been killed over the last year. Among the narco-guerrillas who are often better-armed and better-financed, and they are dying at a rate of more than 100 per month. The intention of our president was to bring the War on Drugs to a halt, which affords them currently less

was clear. The U.S. does not approve of drug money influencing the political system in Colombia, a country where drug money influences almost everything. We think most would agree with this philosophy. The balance of power has shifted from monopolistic cartels to shiftable, armed narco-guerrillas entering the drug trade because of the huge financial incentives, forming a counter-narcotics assistance goes to the Colombian military and the Clinton administration.

Nearly all of the world's cocaine supply has Colombian fingerprints on it, either from growing coca, processing the coca grown elsewhere, or transporting it to the United States. Colombian drug cartels have the market cornered on the world's supply of cocaine and distribution as well as move and move of the deadly heroin in the United States.

Year after year, our ambassador maintains his position that the U.S. does not need DEA presence in Colombia, despite specific direction and funding for new DEA agents in Colombia by Congress and has withheld assistance to the CNP. The CNP, along with the Colombian military, have single-hand-

edly squashed the terror-laced reign of the Cali and Medellin drug cartels, who violently ran the underworld international narcotics traffic with impunity for so many years.

As a result, the balance of power has shifted from monopolistic cartels to shiftable, armed narco-guerrillas entering the drug trade because of the huge financial incentives, forming a counter-narcotics assistance goes to the Colombian military and the Clinton administration.

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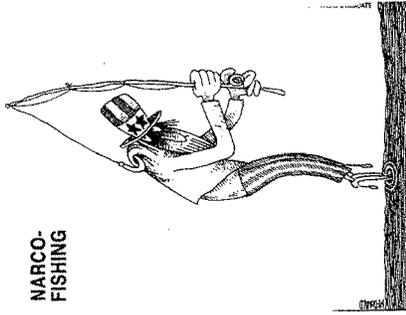
statistics show heroin is making a comeback as the drug of choice on America's streets, and the administration has yet to establish a collection strategy to deal with the problem. Heroin is especially epidemic in communities in small hard to interdict quantities, doesn't need precursor chemicals, or big labs to produce, and must be fought at its source.

Clinton administration has been purely rhetorical. The result of the Clinton administration's action, and more importantly, is painfully clear: Colombia is bleeding, and struggling to evade the constant barrage of attacks from guerrilla organizations, who have formed an unholy alliance with the narco-traffickers. Struggling to maintain a sense of dignity and stature in the face of the Clinton administration's inaction in the United States, the result is an escalation of drugs entering America's streets and schools.

Certification was created by the administration to give the U.S. (including by decertifying Colombia and failing to provide a national interest waiver — which they could still provide — the administration has added further evidence of an abysmal record in our War on Drugs. It's shameful that we are offering little more than rhetorical support for Colombia's democracy and the national security of the United States hang in the balance.

Rep. Dan Burton is chairman of the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee. Rep. Benjamin Gilman is chairman of the International Relations Committee. Rep. Hasteri is chief deputy whip for the House Government Reform Committee. Subcommittees on National Security.

Turning our back on a drug war ally



MARCO-FISHING

Commentary

J. DENNIS HASTERT

Twice again struck last week as 10 Colombian National Police (CNP) officers were murdered and 100 injured in a remote-controlled explosive was activated in a Bogotá police station. Unfortunately, this is nothing new. In the last nine years, this is the War on Drugs.

Nearly all the world's cocaine supply has Colombian fingerprints on it. The balance of power has shifted from monoethnic cartels to well-armed narco-guerrillas entering the market from the world's financial incentives more than \$60 million per month by U.S. government estimates). These groups can afford to buy the latest weaponry, and they are well equipped with arms and under-equipped CNP and Colombian military.

Despite two years of decertification, the elite Special Forces unit has maintained a high morale and an outstanding record of success using mostly archaic armaments and antiquated weapons. That affords them less than two weeks' ammunition, they must spend at least \$100,000 on each UH-1H helicopter. The U.S. State Department has been unable to get them in the air safely, although lacking adequate protection without the rapid-fire miniguns the Clinton administration has repeatedly promised, and failed, to supply the Colombian military.

Fighting a drug war with sticks and stones

to provide for more than three years. Huey helicopter operations are hindered at high-density altitudes over 5,000 feet, yet pilots routinely fly at 10,000 feet in the Andes to provide cover for eradication forces, which the CNP choppers drop off. The CNP choppers are "utility helicopters" to be delivered to the CNP's DANVI forces so they can more effectively conduct high-altitude operations.

The CNP is willing to operationally implement whatever assistance we provide. Our financial aid has been substantial since President Clinton chose to decertify Colombia as a partner in the War on Drugs, in a symbolic effort to punish the Colombian government for its failure to provide One victim of the decertification is the CNP. As you read, there is \$11.8 million appropriated to help the CNP. The U.S. State Department debates granting a '614 waiver' (this would free up most of the money). This money is desperately needed for spare parts and helicopter repair, as well as



national security of the United States hang in the balance. Sign the 614 waiver, Mr. President

Rep. J. Dennis Hastert, Illinois Republican, chairman of the House Government Reform Committee's subcommittee on international affairs, just returned from a nine-day tour in South America, including the key cocaine-producing region of Colombia.

reluctant to help them. The CNP has done an outstanding job, yet due to a political shenanigan, it is being punished for the success of the Clinton administration's abysmal record in the war on drugs. The CNP needs the right equipment, and it's shamed that we are offering little more than rhetorical support. Colombia's democracy, which is Latin America's oldest, and the American Government of this been

CNP Counter-Narcotics Helicopter Air Wing

HELICOPTERS	FLYING	<i>NOT FLYING</i>
Bell 206 L3	3	
Bell 206 L4	2	2
Bell 206 B Training	3	
Bell 206 L	1	
Bell 212 & UH-1N * U.S. State Dept (INL)-provided	2	4
Others	3	3
Huey II	2	
UH-1H	8	6
TOTAL	23	15

*** June, 1998, Assistant Secretary of State Randy Beers, "Congressmen, I can assure you these [helicopters] will not be hangar queens."**

A year and several million dollars later, only 2 of the 6 INL-provided Bell 212's are flying.

Source: US State Department, (NAS) Bogota

STATE'S BROKEN PROMISES

(partial list, 1996-present)

Time Line - Huey II's for Colombian National Police (CNP) to fight drugs

- **September 11, 1996** hearing, full HIRC, *Overall U.S. Counter Narcotics Policy Towards Colombia*. State Department INL Director, "...The U.S. Government will commit to deliver as soon as possible, without delay to the Colombian National Police, an equal number, 11, of UH-1H Huey's, which will be converted to Huey II's to improve lift, range and high altitude performance."
- **October 16, 1996** State Department letter to Chairman Gilman following September 11, 1996 hearing, "... 12 UH-1H helicopters for the CNP have been included in the FY 96 Section 506 (a) (2) draw down As you know, it is our intention to convert a number of UH-1H helicopters to the so called "Super Huey" configuration for the CNP."
- **February 12, 1998** *Washington Times*, State Department official quoted, "There have been long standing plans to upgrade Super Hueys. We plan to do 10 helicopters this year (1998)"
- **June 8, 1998** State Department letter to Chairmen Gilman and Burton on aid to Colombia, "The State Department has begun to upgrade the UH-1H helicopters to 'Super Huey' status, and based on the terms of the contract we expect to have 10 fully upgraded helicopters by Spring 1999. In fact we hope to have 5 helicopters by year's end."
- **March 3, 1999** hearing, HIRC Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, *Anti-Drug Efforts in the Americas*. State Department INL Assistant Secretary, Rand Beers, on Huey IIs, "the next shipment in May 1999, although I have asked if we can possibly move that up...Five (more) will be delivered in June 1999, five in December 1999, and six in January 2000."
- **May 7, 1999** State Department fax to HIRC staff, "INL expects the next shipment of four Huey IIs to arrive in Colombia in late June or early July, rather than in May as originally projected."
- **June 29, 1999** HIRC staff inquiry of State Department Legislative Affairs, "End of July, 4 Huey IIs to Colombia."
- **July 12, 1999** letter to Chairmen Gilman and Burton from the State Department, "At this time, we anticipate the contractor will have four more Huey IIS ready for shipment to Colombia in late July."

NET RESULT...

- **July 31, 1999** came and past without any delivery of Huey IIs to the Colombian National Police. We are now at August 6th and we still have only **2** Huey IIs on the CNP flight line to fight drugs at their source.



United States Department of State

Washington, D. C. 20520

OCT 10 1995

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter of September 17. We believe that we now have the information you requested.

First, we did not include minigun wiring and motors or Night Vision Devices for the Colombian National Police (CNP) in the section 506(a)(2) package, as they were not available from within DOD stocks. We are able to purchase the Night Vision Devices with International Narcotics Control (INC) funds and plan to proceed with a purchase in FY 1997. We cannot, however, purchase lethal equipment such as minigun items with INC funds. Moreover, we are unable at present to purchase these items with Foreign Military Financing funds, which have been suspended as a result of denial of narcotics certification of Colombia. To release FMF funds will require a legislative waiver of current law, and we look forward to working with you in the next Congress to achieve this result.

With respect to the Majority Staff recommendations, we have every indication that, while the UH-60 helicopters in question are multipurpose, the military will continue to be responsive to police requests for assistance in the counternarcotics mission. We also expect the military to continue to seek and act on opportunities to interdict illicit drugs. This is a point which we have and will continue to emphasize to the extent necessary in our discussions with the Government of Colombia.

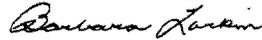
Next, as you noted, 12 UH-1H helicopters for the CNP ~~have been included in the FY 96 section 506 (a) (2) drawdown notified by the President on September 14.~~ As you know, it is our intention to convert a number of UH-1H helicopters to the so-called "Super Huey" configuration for the CNP. The exact number and timing will be determined in the procurement process as we seek a commercial source for the upgrade. Finally, we propose to address your reporting requirements within our annual Human Rights and End Use Monitoring reports to Congress. We will be pleased to provide briefings to appropriate Committee staff upon request.

The Honorable
Benjamin A. Gilman, Chairman,
Committee on International Relations,
House of Representatives

We appreciate your attention to this matter and the concerns you have expressed. We hope that this important sale will be finalized soon.

Should you desire further clarification, we would be pleased to be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Barbara Larkin
Acting Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs



Helicopters?

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

SEP 15 1998

*RC-185
11907*

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I wish to inform you that the President intends to exercise his authority for FY 1998 under section 506(a)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (FAA), to direct a drawdown of up to \$70,000,000 of articles and services from the inventory and resources of the Department of Defense, and military education and training from the Department of Defense, up to \$1,000,000 in articles and services from the inventory and resources of the Department of Transportation, up to \$800,000 in articles and services from the inventory and resources of the Department of the Treasury, up to \$200,000 in articles and services from the inventory and resources of the Department of Justice, and up to \$3,000,000 in articles and services from the inventory and resources of the Department of State for the purposes and under the authorities of chapter 8 of part I of the FAA.

The President's proposal would provide much-needed counternarcotics assistance for Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamiaca, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Antiqua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Finally, I wish to notify you, pursuant to section 484(a)(2) of the FAA, that the Secretary has decided that application of section 484(a)(1) of the FAA with respect to aircraft to be transferred to the Government of Colombia under this proposal would be contrary to the national interest of the United States.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

Barbara Larkin
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Enclosure:
Memorandum of Justification

The Honorable
Newt Gingrich,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

SEP 29 1997

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter of September 4 to Jane Becker, Acting Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), regarding efforts to ensure the safety of Colombian and American pilots engaged in counternarcotics missions in Colombia. The Administration shares your concern, and has been working hard to ensure this inherently dangerous mission is made as safe as possible.

The Department's INL Bureau arranged for a Subject Matter Expert (SME) team to travel to Colombia which was able to repair several miniguns for use in Colombian National Police helicopters. The Department then referred the SME team recommendations to DOD which has agreed to assist in locating parts and making systems operable. At the same time, INL put nearly \$600,000 in FY97 towards buying six new minigun systems as soon as possible through the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Crane, Indiana. INL also intends to procure more systems in FY98 through the same means. I understand that your staff had an opportunity to witness a demonstration of the new system and agrees that purchasing these is a sound decision over the long run. We remain committed to providing the best possible protection to Colombian and American pilots operating in Colombia.

Making the most effective use of key assets such as helicopters in our counternarcotics programs is an issue which is under constant review. We have plans to provide Colombia with five UH-1H helicopters which have recently been refurbished in Alabama and are armored. They are well-suited to the Colombian mission and should be able to enter operations immediately upon arrival. In the interim, based on our assessment of current operations in several countries, we also intend to transfer to Colombia six helicopters which had formerly been used in counternarcotics operations in Bolivia. We will continue to keep you informed of our plans for the use of helicopters and other assets in Latin America for counternarcotics purposes.

The Honorable
Dan Burton, Chairman,
Committee on Government Reform and Oversight,
House of Representatives.

I hope that this information responds to your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact us again if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Barbara Larkin
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

MAR 26 1988

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft House Resolution on provision of UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to the Colombian National Police. The Administration supports the broad sentiments of the Colombia resolution even as we differ from its prescribed remedy. Our source country strategy is a regional effort. This resolution, focussed only on Colombia, would necessarily draw funds away from our programs in Peru and Bolivia, where we have witnessed dramatic successes in the past two years. Our Peruvian and Bolivian programs have been instrumental in producing a 9.6% drop in regional coca cultivation. Now is not the time to undercut these successful programs.

Colombia is a country besieged by the intertwined threats of illicit narcotics trafficking and the violent insurgency. The Colombian National Police (CNP) and its leadership have done tremendous work, performing with courage and dedication under difficult and dangerous conditions. They deserve both our support and our admiration.

Colombian heroin is a serious threat to our national interests, although the emergence of this threat has not diminished the threat posed by Colombian cocaine. We agree that eradication is the most efficient, but not the only, method for stopping the flow of heroin. Given that opium poppy is grown at high altitudes, improved performance helicopters are necessary to eradicate effectively.

The UH-1H is an older aircraft, but we note that the CNP and the INL Air Division have maintained a high readiness rate at relatively low cost with more than 45 of these helicopters for several years now. The Black Hawk is a high performance helicopter capable of performing well at higher altitudes than the UH-1H, but it is considerably more expensive to procure and maintain and would represent a new and unfamiliar aircraft in the CNP Air Wing. The difficulties of introducing an entirely new aircraft into an existing inventory should not be underestimated. For example, the Colombian Army has had an extremely difficult time integrating the Black Hawks purchased over a year ago into its force structure, and still can not operate them independently.

The Honorable
Benjamin A. Gilman, Chairman,
Committee on International Relations,
House of Representatives.

We believe that a UH-1H upgraded to the SuperHuey configuration can perform quite adequately at higher altitude at far lower cost and disruption to the CNP Air Wing. The State Department has such a refurbishment program underway for 10 UH 1Hs and will continue the program next fiscal year. Contracts were signed with Bell Textron and U.S. Helicopter for the first of these upgrades on March 18.

We believe that the purchase of 3 Black Hawks for the CNP is neither cost effective, nor tactically wise. To contemplate the replacement of the entire CNP UH-1H force with Black Hawks would be financially reckless for both the U.S. as the purchaser and Colombia as the operator. The financial costs of replacing all of the CNP's UH-1Hs (some 35 currently) with Black Hawks and operating them would be prohibitive.

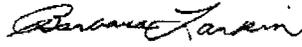
We do not support the purchase of 3 Black Hawks for the CNP and we do not support the wholesale replacement of UH-1Hs with Black Hawks. We believe that the Huey upgrade program which is currently underway is the most cost-effective program for Colombians and the taxpayers of the United States.

As you know, the Administration is currently consulting with interested Members of Congress, including the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, to determine an alternative approach to fulfilling the interdiction and eradication needs of the CNP. We contacted your staff on March 24 to schedule a meeting for you with Administration officials to discuss this matter, and were told that you would prefer to postpone such a meeting until after your trip to Colombia. We remain available to brief you at your earliest convenience and look forward to providing the Administration's views on Colombia before your Committee next week.

Again, we strongly support the efforts of Colombian National Police and their use for increased helicopter lift capability at higher altitudes. In the last three years, we have dramatically increased counternarcotics funding for Colombia. In FY-95, we provided a total of \$28.85 million, including INL funds, FMP and other assistance. In FY-96, we increased this to \$62.93 million with an increase in Air Wing spending in Colombia and a \$40 million drawdown of defense equipment. In FY-97, the total climbed to more than \$90 million, with dramatic increases in INL program and Air Wing budgets in Colombia, another drawdown, and the release of up to \$30 million in frozen Foreign Military Financing. This makes Colombia the single largest recipient of U.S. counternarcotics assistance in the world, a measure of our commitment.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,



Barbara Larkin
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Comin...
United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

JUL 12 1999



Dear Mr. Chairman:

This is in response to your letter of May 21, 1999, regarding the provision of Huey II helicopters to the Colombian National Police (CNP) and base security to protect these assets. We appreciate the opportunity to update you on these matters.

U.S. Helicopter, the contractor that is preparing Huey IIs, is not only installing modification kits on these helicopters, but is also performing a full refurbishment of the airframes. The objective is to provide top quality aircraft that will not require extensive maintenance for a considerable time period. As such, the situation with each helicopter is unique in terms of the amount of repair and restoration necessary. We are able to obtain projections periodically, but these are subject to change based on U.S. Helicopter's actual experience in producing the Huey II helicopters. At this time, we anticipate the contractor will have four more Huey IIs ready for shipment to Colombia by late July. In fact, two of these four are currently complete. These four aircraft will be transported as soon as possible after U.S. Government acceptance, subject to availability of military air transport. We expect the final four of the first 10 helicopters to be completed and shipped in September, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Regarding the configuration of the Huey II aircraft, the State Department and U.S. Helicopter have done their utmost to incorporate into the production process those modifications requested by the CNP. Modifications for mini-gun wiring, dual electric fuel boost pumps, and grease type main rotor hubs will be accomplished on all aircraft prior to shipment. Unfortunately, owing to problems with technical specifications provided by the CNP regarding the desired installation of additional hard points and the

The Honorable
Dan Burton, Chairman,
Committee on Government Reform and Oversight,
House of Representatives.

Keep follow-up w/ Dan

airworthiness concerns associated with this, it was determined that it would not be possible to accomplish this work on the next four aircraft without suffering further delays in schedule. Based upon CNP preference, we will ship the next four aircraft without this modification rather than experience this delay, and the CNP will make these changes in accordance with its own internal procedures upon arrival of the helicopters. We have also initiated action to ensure that adequate auxiliary fuel cells will be available for existing and future helicopters. INL has allotted funds to the Embassy's Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) for the procurement of eleven sets of auxiliary fuel tanks which, along with existing tanks, should be sufficient to meet mission requirements. Also, with regard to your reference to FLIR, please be advised that the Department of State has received no request from the CNP to have these aircraft so equipped.

Regarding base security enhancements to protect the Huey II helicopters and other assets, a U.S. Army Special Forces team recently completed a three-month long comprehensive security assessment of 15 CNP bases throughout Colombia. Their findings have been shared with the CNP leadership. We intend to spend the \$6 million made available for this purpose to enable the GOC/CNP to carry out the recommendations made by the Special Forces. INL has allotted the funds to NAS/Bogota for the upgrades.

We trust this information responds to your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need more information or believe that we may be of further assistance in this, or any other matter.

Sincerely,



Barbara Larkin
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

JUN - 9 1999

Dear Mr. Chairman,

This is in response to your letter dated April 19, regarding the April 11 shutdown of a Colombian National Police (CNP) helicopter by leftist guerrillas, and the unfortunate injuries sustained by the helicopter co-pilot.

We have looked into the concerns raised in your letter, and have requested additional information from the CNP. U.S. Embassy Bogota was informed by the CNP that the CNP co-pilot and the door-gunner (a CNP enlisted man) were allowed to go on the mission without helmets. In response to our inquiry, the CNP admitted that members of their flight crews frequently fly without their helmets, in violation of accepted safety protocols. Colonel Gallego considers this a failure of CNP Air Service leadership and management, and has assured us that corrective action will be taken.

We also inquired about the status of helmet stocks in the CNP. According to the Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) and CNP records, the CNP have received 232 helmets since 1992. CNP records indicate that these helmets have all been issued and that they have a total of 211 flight-crew personnel with a requirement to use them. In late March 1999, seventy helmets were delivered to a DOD warehouse in Charleston, SC, for onward shipment to Bogota. The additional helmets were shipped to Colombia by air on April 20, and are now in the hands of the CNP.

In regard to your allegation that the M-60 machinegun on the helicopter jammed, preventing it from returning fire, we have investigated and found this not to be the case. According to the CNP, the M-60s were operational at the time of the crash.

The Honorable

Dan Burton, Chairman,

Committee on Government Reform and Oversight,
House of Representatives.



United States Department of State

*Assistant Secretary of State
for International Narcotics and
Law Enforcement Affairs*

Washington, D.C. 20520

June 18, 1998

Rosso Jose Serrano
Director General
Colombian National Police
Santa Fe de Bogota, Colombia

Dear General Serrano:

Thank you for your telephone call today. I want to confirm by means of this note my intentions with respect to the Bell 212 Helicopters we discussed. I intend to locate and send you, within the next 30-60 days, at least three Bell 212s for use solely by the CNP. Moreover, after the beginning of the next Fiscal Year (October 1, 1998), I plan to provide you with three additional Bell 212s. You, in turn, agree to obtain the necessary pilots and mechanics so that these helicopters may be put into immediate operational use.

I believe that we both agree that this is the best way to quickly upgrade the CNP's capability to increase operations at altitudes above 6,000 feet--while we wait for the Huey Upgrade program now in progress to turn out the upgraded UH-1H aircraft the CNP needs.

Thank you for your cooperation in this and all key Counternarcotics matters. I will be in Peru next week, traveling on to Colombia week after next. Please feel free to contact me through my office in Washington in the meantime. I look forward to seeing you again in Bogota where we will discuss this proposal further.

With warm regards,

Rand Beers, Acting

cc:
Ambassador Sherman
Chairman Gilman
Chairman Hastert
Chairman Callahan

5/7/98
State 209
Affairs

Col- Helos

HUEY II UPDATE - MAY 1999

INL expects the next shipment of four Huey IIs to arrive in Colombia in late June or early July, rather than in May, as originally projected. Following that, we expect the final four of the first ten aircraft to be delivered by approximately August. As with previous estimates, this is only a projection, subject to change based on our actual experience in producing the Huey II aircraft. While we will do everything possible to work with the contractor to expedite completion, we will not compromise on the quality and safety of the end product.

There are several reasons for the delay in schedule:

- U.S. Helicopter indicates that the Bell kits did not prove to be as "production ready" as they anticipated. They are recommending to Bell that in the future the packing list for the kits, which includes some 4,000 individual items, be cross-referenced more clearly against part numbers. There were also, in the initial kits received, some shortages of components and special tools. And, U.S. Helicopter reportedly had to address some problems associated with technical drawings. As a result, actual work required for both refurbishment of the aircraft and installation of the kits exceeded what was originally estimated.
- The CNP requested changes in the work requirements, such as adding grease-type main rotor hubs, dual electrical fuel boost pumps, and wiring for GAU-17 miniguns.
- Once the contract specifications were finalized and negotiations and adjustments were completed, it became apparent that the FY 98 Systems Support and Upgrade budget line was not sufficient to cover all of the first 10 conversions. We lacked funding for five engine conversions and one airframe upgrade. Additional funds became available via the Emergency Counternarcotics Supplemental Appropriation, but because of a congressional "hold", which prevented expenditure of these additional funds, completion of engine work and progress on the modifications

- 2 -

were delayed. This "hold" was not lifted until January 29.

We are also working on a follow-on group of fifteen aircraft. Kits for these aircraft have been ordered, and induction airframes are also being lined up. The CNP plans to complete six of the upgrades, with U.S. Helicopter doing the other nine. Delivery of these fifteen aircraft will most likely be spread between December of 1999 and July of 2000, depending on a number of factors, including the speed with which the CNP is able to complete its upgrades.

REQUEST TO MOVE COLOMBIA UP IN PRIORITY

INL has requested that Colombia be moved up on DSCA's priority list, but ultimately the decision rests with DoD. We will certainly stay engaged and continue to press DoD on the issue.



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

APR 7 1999

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am responding to your letter of March 8, 1999, regarding your hold on counternarcotics aid for Colombia, as expressed in our reprogramming request of February 23, 1999.

The Department of State plans to arm the six UH-60 helicopters that have been ordered for the Colombian National Police (CNP) with either the 7.62mm minigun system (the Mark 44 system or equivalent), or with the .50 caliber GAU-19 system, or with a combination of the two. The weapon chosen must, of course, meet Sikorsky Aircraft's Certificate of Compliance requirements for compatibility with the airframe and with the other unique systems that the CNP has chosen to mount on the UH-60s. If the 7.62 system and the GAU-19 prove acceptable, the exact mix and number of systems acquired will be purchased and installed according to the wishes of the CNP and the funds available.

We propose to have Sikorsky conduct Certificate of Compliance testing with the two weapons systems, using the first fully equipped CNP helicopter available. We will request that the tests be conducted on an urgent basis so as not to delay delivery of the aircraft to Colombia. Further, the Department of State will make every effort to expedite delivery of these helicopters and all other critical counternarcotics assistance to Colombia, including working with the Defense Security and Cooperation Agency to make Colombia their top priority in obtaining equipment.

The Honorable,
Benjamin A. Gilman,
Chairman,
Committee on International Relations,
House of Representatives.

- 2 -

As you are aware, Section 484 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, requires the Department to retain title to aircraft transferred to a foreign country unless retention of title would be contrary to the national interest of the United States. At this time, we do not believe that circumstances support such a determination, although we will continue to monitor the situation and may at a future date conclude that transfer of title is appropriate. The agreement with the Government of Colombia will include the following provisions, which have been discussed with and agreed to, by the Colombian National Police:

- The six Blackhawk helicopters will be provided on a no-cost lease basis to the Colombian National Police and will be incorporated into its Air Service.
- The CNP will manage and direct the Blackhawk program with assistance from the Narcotics Affairs Section of the United States Embassy in Bogota. This assistance will include warranty and maintenance support packages, advisory assistance and training. It is agreed that the CNP has the primary responsibility to provide maintenance and supply support to these helicopters in the same manner as other aircraft in its inventory (to original equipment manufacture standards).
- The CNP Anti-Narcotics Division (DIRAN) will manage the operational requirements of the Blackhawk fleet, with the DIRAN commander having day-to-day operational control of the fleet.
- The Blackhawk helicopters will be piloted by qualified CNP pilots at all times and may be used at DIRAN discretion in joint counternarcotics operations with other services of the Colombian Armed Forces.

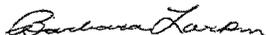
- 3 -

- The GOC understands the helicopters are to be used by the CNP for counternarcotics law enforcement activities only, except in times of natural disaster or other emergency to prevent loss of life or otherwise engage in humanitarian undertakings.

Finally, we are working with the CNP to ensure, that in the future, all Huey IIs delivered to Colombia will be configured exactly as the CNP wants them.

We trust this information has been responsive to your concerns. If you need further information on this subject, or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Barbara Larkin
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Mr. MICA. I would like to recognize Ms. Schakowsky from Illinois.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the opportunity to hear the testimony of these two esteemed chairmen and my colleagues.

I want to take a moment to make a statement which actually is more in the way of a series of questions. The recent call by General Barry McCaffrey to increase spending on drug enforcement in Colombia puts the United States at a crossroads. Do we invest in a militaristic drug war that escalates the regional conflict, 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 GAO, "Despite 2 years of extensive herbicide spraying, U.S. 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.

Considering the 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? 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 recently on a reconnaissance flight, 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 or 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?

Exactly what is it that we believe this aid will accomplish? Is it the first in a series of blank checks for a war that has 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 of 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're discussing \$1 billion for Colombia, but yesterday, we cut \$1 billion from the COPS program 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 emergency 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 in 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 the opportunity to make this statement.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentlelady for her statement.

I would like to recognize the gentleman from Arkansas Mr. Hutchinson.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate this hearing, and I want to express my thanks to Mr. Burton and Mr. Gilman for their testimony today and their leadership on this issue. After Mr. Burton's testimony, I certainly am looking forward to hearing the testimony of the State Department in reference to those helicopters.

And, Mr. Gilman, I couldn't agree with you more in regard to the balanced approach that we have to maintain, reducing the demand for cocaine in this country, the demand for drugs, while also going after the source countries.

I, as many members of the subcommittee, have been to Colombia and met General Seranno and appreciate the work that he's doing there, and they do need our assistance. And I respect the questions that have just been raised by the gentlelady from Illinois, very appropriate questions as to what our strategy is. Hopefully, we can answer some of those questions today. I thought for a moment she was speaking of our intervention in Kosovo, what our plan is for an exit strategy.

And this region is very, very close. When you look at the New Tribes Missionaries that have been captured, perhaps killed by the FARC guerillas there, and then you look at the servicemen that we've lost, this impacts the lives of Americans. And so I think it's appropriate that we address our role there and our commitment there. And I'm delighted with this hearing.

While this hearing is primarily designed to highlight the precarious situation in which Colombia finds itself, I want to take a moment, Mr. Chairman, to honor an Arkansan who was on the front lines of our war against drugs in that country. Chief Warrant Officer Thomas Moore, a fellow Arkansan, has paid the ultimate price for the defense of his country. In a little noticed incident last month, Moore and four of his compatriots lost their lives to keep our kids safe from the scourge of drugs.

On July 23rd, Moore and his fellow air crew took off for a routine intelligent mission over southern Colombia. The crew was tasked with gathering information to support Colombia's counterdrug efforts. The craft disappeared from radar screens while over rebel-controlled territory and later was discovered in the mountains along Colombia's border with Ecuador. There were no survivors.

Moore joined the Army in 1988 after attending the Air Force Academy. In 1991, he served with distinction in Southwest Asia during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. After 4 years of enlisted

service, Moore was selected for the warrant officer program. He graduated from flight school in 1993 as a scout helicopter pilot, and in 1996 was selected to attend a fixed wing qualification course. He graduated and joined the 204th Military Intelligence Battalion, and as a result of his excellent performance was selected to fly the RC7, the Army's premier reconnaissance plane. Moore had deployed several times on missions to South America from his post at Fort Bliss, in El Paso, TX.

His awards include the Kuwait and Saudi Arabia Liberation Medals, the Army Achievement Medal and the Army Commendation Medal.

Moore is from Higden, AR; and is survived by his wife and two children.

Mr. Chairman, this happened 1 month ago. And I do not believe it has captured the attention, the recognition that is deserved for these brave soldiers who have really committed themselves to serving our country.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for this opportunity to pay tribute to Chief Warrant Officer Thomas Moore and his fellow soldiers. They embodied the spirit that undergirds our determined efforts to fight narcotraffickers wherever they seek to ply their poisonous trade. They are indeed unsung heroes.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman for his statement.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Asa Hutchinson follows:]

**COMMENTS OF CONGRESSMAN ASA HUTCHINSON IN HONOR OF
CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER THOMAS G. MOORE**

**Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources
House Government Reform Committee**

August 6, 1999

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing today. It is long past time to focus attention on the near-emergency situation facing the Colombian people. While this hearing is primarily designed to highlight the precarious situation in which Colombia finds itself, I do want to take a moment to honor an Arkansan who was on the front lines of our fight against drugs.

Chief Warrant Officer Thomas Moore, a fellow Arkansan, has paid the ultimate price for the defense of his country. In a little noticed incident last month, Moore and four of his compatriots lost their lives trying to keep our kids safe from the scourge of drugs.

On July 23, Moore and his fellow air crew took off for a routine intelligence mission over southern Colombia. The crew was tasked with gathering information to support Colombia's counterdrug efforts. The craft disappeared from radar screens while over rebel-controlled territory and later was discovered in the mountains along Colombia's border with Ecuador. There were no survivors.

Moore joined the Army in 1988 after attending the Air Force Academy. In 1991, he served with distinction in Southwest Asia during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. After four years of enlisted service, Moore was selected for the Warrant Officer program. He graduated from flight school in 1993 as a scout helicopter pilot and in 1996, was selected to attend a fixed wing qualification course. He graduated and joined the 204th Military Intelligence Battalion, and as a result of his excellent performance, was selected to fly the RC-7, the Army's premier reconnaissance plane. Moore had deployed several times on missions to South America from his post at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas.

His awards include the Kuwait and Saudi Arabia Liberation Medals, the Army Achievement Medal and the Army Commendation Medal. Moore, who is from Higdon, Arkansas, is survived by his wife and two children.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for this opportunity to pay tribute to Chief Warrant Officer Thomas Moore and his fellow soldiers. They embody the spirit that undergirds our determined efforts to fight narco-traffickers wherever they seek to ply their poisonous trade. They are indeed unsung heroes.

Mr. MICA. I am pleased now to recognize Mr. Reyes, who has joined us. He's a member of the Armed Services Committee. We thank you for joining us this morning, and you're recognized, sir.

Mr. REYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to participate as part of your committee. I want to tell you that I hold both chairmen in the highest esteem. I know they worked very hard on this and many other issues, including annually on the issue of certification of Mexico, which I think is one of the most important things that we do in this Congress is recognize the efforts that other countries are making on behalf of fighting drug traffickers and international drug smuggling.

It occurs to me that in the context of what we're doing this morning and what your committee does, it's very important that we have a clear understanding of what the challenges and what the accuracy is. I came to Congress after 26½ years service in the U.S. Border Patrol, part of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and I will tell you that Border Patrol agents as part of Operation Snowcap have been at the forefront of this Nation's war on drugs since the early 1980's.

I had the opportunity to travel to Colombia and observe the activities of the Colombian National Police, as well as the participation by DEA and by the United States Border Patrol as a result of Operation Snowcap, so I have a good understanding of the issue. I have a good perspective based again on experience of what is going and what has been going on in Colombia for literally several decades. I have experience under the Reagan administration, under the Bush administration, and obviously under this administration, and it occurs to me that we in Congress do a lot of political jousting, and part of what I think is important is that we be accurate about framing the argument and not allow politics to interfere with what is very dangerous work for our men and women fighting both in this country and internationally to stop narcotics trafficking.

I would tell you that the loss of five soldiers. I represent the 16th District of Texas, which includes Fort Bliss, and the loss of five soldiers occurred not a month ago, but literally less than 2 weeks ago. They included Captain Jennifer J. Odom, Captain Jose Santiago, Warrant Officer Thomas Moore, as my colleague from Arkansas has already mentioned, Specialist Bruce Cluff and Specialist Ray Kreuger.

I would also remind this committee that of all of the five soldiers, we have actually only recovered the remains of three, two are still on that mountaintop in Colombia. And I mention that because it's important that we keep in mind why we're here. It's important that we understand that in order to overcome and to be successful in fighting narcotics trafficking and the scourge of narcotics in our neighborhoods, and we go through this every year when the issue of certification comes up.

I heard mention this morning where the administration was being criticized because they decertified Colombia on two separate occasions. Members here this morning want to see Mexico decertified. So it brings to my mind that there's an issue here of either confusion or hypocrisy at play, and it's not helpful to the efforts and the sacrifices that are being made not only by the five soldiers who already have lost their lives, but by the efforts of the U.S. Bor-

der Patrol as they participated in this endeavor in past years, by DEA today, by members of the military even as we speak here this morning.

Part of the challenge is, as I see it, is to work together. And, again, I get back to accuracy. I asked you what kind of infrared system was on that video, because from my experience, that looked more like daylight video than infrared. You cannot see smoke from a helicopter after it's been shot and flames coming out in the way that that came out in terms of infrared.

So, again, I make mention of these things so that we can work jointly, both as Democrats and Republicans, both as liberals and conservatives, both as those that have an understanding of the issue not only locally in our neighborhoods, but internationally in scope, as I do, and bring forward people that understand in order for us to succeed in fighting international drug trafficking, in order for us to succeed in being able to come up with a solution, we have to approach this thing from the proverbial three-legged stool, and that's with education, with treatment, and with interdiction, law enforcement, however you want to phrase it.

All three are important; all three are critical. And it doesn't do us any good to sit here and nitpick when there are the lives of our men and women both in the military and in law enforcement at risk both in this country and internationally.

I hope that, and I am willing to lend my expertise, Mr. Chairman, in any way that I can and that if you see fit, to help us frame the larger issues, to help us frame the challenge that we face so that together we can reach a successful conclusion to the scourge that frustrates all of us in our neighborhoods and all of us in our capacity as representatives of the people of this country.

And I thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman for joining us.

Now, last but not least, the gentleman who has been very active on our subcommittee on this issue, Mr. Souder, the gentleman from Indiana. You're recognized.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I also want to, before I make a statement here, pay tribute to Chairman Gilman for his leadership in the Narcotics Select Committee, as well as International Relations Committee; to Chairman Burton not only for his work in Government Reform, but also in International Relations in Central America, because it's the committed efforts of both of you, in addition to your work on this subcommittee, but particularly with your leadership at the full committee chairman level and being able to keep the focus on, or we would really be in bad shape, probably be gone by now in the sense of what's been happening not only in Colombia, but Peru and Bolivia and Central America.

It was very disturbing to me to hear somehow that we haven't somehow totally wiped out the drug problem is grounds that we should back up. General McCaffrey frequently compares the drug battle to cancer. We spent billions in fighting cancer in America, but we haven't stopped cancer. So should we cut all of our funding out and give up on fighting breast cancer and other forms of cancer in America? It's an absurd argument that we heard just a little while ago.

If you want to try and focus on the treatment problem, then focus in addition to the other things on the treatment problem. Congressman Ramstad has an access bill that I'm a cosponsor of, and we need to move access for drug treatment.

Nobody here today is against drug treatment. We have the safe and drug-free schools bill moving through the committee and many other things that will be in the Labor-HHS bill, and we're moving those this Congress. We heard, oh, we're spending far more on the domestic side than in targets.

But my former boss, former Senator Dan Coats, used to have a story that he liked. I would like to paraphrase here, and that is that people—it would be similar to coming up to a river where the babies are drowning, and then you're busy pulling these babies out like crazy trying to save their lives, and somebody says, I wonder how the baby is getting in here. I wonder what is happening upriver. Well, Colombia is the source of the river. It's coming from Colombia.

We're sitting here how we're going to help our communities, how we're going to get the drowning babies out. We ought to look at the source, too, because if we do not get to the source, we cannot handle it in Fort Wayne, we cannot do enough in our schools, we cannot do enough in our streets, we cannot build enough prisons, because it is both a supply and a demand problem.

One other thing that really has disturbed me, and I was interested if Chairman Gilman has any comments on this, too, because you said you had been in Congress 27 years, and that means at the start you were there as we were coming out of Vietnam. And one thing we seem to be fighting here is this Vietnam phobia that we have in this country of everything is like Vietnam, is it like Vietnam, and there are several clear things here that are not like Vietnam, in my opinion.

One, it's in our hemisphere; Colombia is 2 hours from Miami. This is not something that's overseas or far away. Second, it's not Vietnam in the sense that drugs that are coming in from Colombia are coming in to my hometown, into my district and into every other area of America, threatening the lives of all of us in this country. It's not a hypothetical battle which I feel it is important to fight around the world. But it is also one that's of direct, clear compelling national interest in the United States.

It's also not Vietnam in the sense that the CNP, as we heard from both of your testimony, wants to fight. They are trained to fight. We just aren't giving them the materials with which to fight. And in the military, certainly General Wilhelm on the ground working now, they're trying to clean up what has been a weakened military, but they want to do it, and they want to be helped. That is not like Vietnam.

But my concern about how it is like Vietnam is that we will give them just enough to never quite win, to never quite succeed, and possibly fail. But we will never give them enough early enough to get the jump on those that are fighting.

That's the parallel to the Vietnam is that we don't have the courage to get in at the front, and then, in effect—then say, oh, well, they can't win. And I would like to hear in particular Chairman Gilman's comment, because you've seen now both ends of this, and

it is one of the stories that we're clearly fighting in the media, is this turning into a Vietnam, and, oh, we need to back up. And we heard it here just a little bit ago.

Mr. GILMAN. Well, if I might, Mr. Chairman, just a brief response, let me note that between 1985 and 1992 with a balanced drug-fighting strategy on both supply and demand at the same time, along with Mrs. Reagan's excellent public relations campaign of "just say no," we were able to reduce monthly cocaine use by nearly 80 percent, which is a demonstration of the fact that by applying an effective strategy, we can make progress.

And this is not the time to retreat. We have, as you so forcefully mentioned, an effective drug-fighting force in Colombia that has the will and the wherewithal that they lack—they lack the wherewithal, the ability to do the job. All they're asking for is some support from our Nation, so let's give them the support that they need.

And General Seranno, who is an outstanding drug fighter, has said that with proper equipment, he could eliminate the opium supply for the heroin within a 2-year period. All we say is, the administration people, our DEA and our State Department working together can be very helpful to him in providing resources he needs, and he would eliminate that source.

We must not take from one to give to the other. We have to fight these on several fronts at one time of both reducing demand and reducing supply. And I thank you for your supportive remarks.

Mr. SOUDER. Thanks. And Mr. Chairman, this is a war in Colombia we cannot, nor the world cannot afford to lose. Whatever it takes, it must be one that cannot be a narcotic state.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman.

I think we've concluded all of the opening statements—oh, I'm sorry. I beg your pardon. I apologize deeply, Mr. Ose, the gentleman from California, I didn't see you at the end. You're recognized.

Mr. OSE. I'm a Stealth helicopter down here. Mr. Chairman, I don't have an opening statement.

Mr. MICA. You're very kind, because we have taken quite some time to hear from these Members.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. I would like to excuse our witnesses who are also members of the panel, ask them to join us if they would.

And now if we could call our second panelist. The second panel and only witness on this panel is General Barry R. McCaffrey. Mr. McCaffrey is the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. He has testified before us before, and he is back with us.

General, you know, I think, the protocol. If you would stand, sir, and raise your right hand. [Witness sworn.]

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

General, we're not going to run the light on you this morning. You're the only witness on this panel, and I know many are anxious to hear from you. So we welcome you back. We salute you for your efforts. You are recognized, sir.

**STATEMENT OF GENERAL BARRY McCAFFREY, DIRECTOR,
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY**

General McCAFFREY. Well, Mr. Chairman, let me thank you, you and your colleagues for the chance to come down here and testify. I was able to listen to the opening panels and all of your opening comments, and I really must applaud you and the other members of the committee for drawing the attention of the country to what I would characterize as an emergency situation.

And I think it's going to require a very careful analysis by the administration and the Congress in the coming months to sort out exactly how do we take on these enormous dilemmas that President Pastrana and his colleagues face in confronting a problem of gigantic dimensions that is worsening over time.

And specifically I would say there are three elements of that problem. The one that very directly affects my own portfolio, of course, is drugs in which we have seen a doubling of coca production in the last 3 years. And so poor Colombia, these 36 million very brave people have now become the No. 1 country on the face of the Earth in terms of undercultivation for cocaine, and indeed in a very short period of time have now become, as has been previously commented on, some 6 metric tons of heroin drug dimension that is simply astonishing.

And I might add it's not just affecting United States citizens, this is affecting Colombians, and the drug abuse problem in that country is skyrocketing, and it's spilling over into their neighbors.

Now a second problem that Colombia faces, however, needs to be taken into account, is a huge economic crisis. It's also clearly linked to the lack of security, which in most ways is fundamentally driven by this explosion of drug production. We're seeing astonishing 20 percent unemployment rate and 45 percent devaluation of the peso and massive economic flight of investor capital.

Who in his right mind would invest in Colombia at this moment? And indeed, not just in terms of foreign capital, but domestic also, how can you try and do cattle ranching if you're fearful of leaving the confines of the major cities?

Then finally, as has been accurately pointed out by some of your earlier witnesses, President Pastrana—and I think this is the will of the Colombia people—is trying to bring to an end 40 plus years of the most mindless violence imaginable, and it's a dynamic process, you know. The FARC and the ELN and the other guerilla groups may have originally had an ideology, and it's not clear to most of us that they have become anything more than terrorist organizations which are fueled by hundreds of millions of dollars of drug-created money.

Now, I heard 1.2 billion mentioned by Chairman Burton. That's the highest number I've heard; the minimal numbers, 215 million a year. Clearly, it's resources on a level that have allowed them to have double the number of automatic weapons and a FARC battalion as the Colombia Army and to pay their narcoguerrilla fighters in some cases up to \$1,000 a month, while the Colombian Army is paying their kids \$200 a month.

The peace process is an important one not just to Colombia, but to all of us. It's a regional problem, and it's going to require a very

multifaceted approach, clearly one aspect of which may well be enhanced support for the security forces at Colombia.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I have tried to pull together in writing in the statement our own views, not just of ONDCP, but obviously those of the Attorney General, Secretary of the Treasury, Defense, and State. And I offer that for the record. And then I put together some charts that I will run through very quickly that I would like, with your permission, to offer for the record.

Mr. MICA. For the record they will all be made a part of the record. Thank you.

General MCCAFFREY. If I may make some very quick comments. And I might add that my colleague over here that will be pulling the slides for me is an intern working with me, Air Force Second Lieutenant Chris Rainy, on loan for the summer from the School of Public Policy. There will be a little bit of flair that may be lacking in my normal presentation.

Please, if you will, first view graph—let me just say that the President did dispatch me on a trip last week that took me to Colombia, No. 1, Ecuador, and Venezuela; Ecuador to look at the FOL at Manta Ecuador, to talk to their congressional leadership, their government officials and the President; into Venezuela to talk to President Chavez, his Defense Minister, Interior Foreign Ministry; and then finally in Oranjestad Aruba, to look at the forward-operating locations in those two places.

I'm very upbeat, to be honest, about the value of our trip, and would be glad to respond to your own questions.

At the end of this coming month, the President will send me back to Brazil, Bolivia and Peru and Argentina. The whole notion would be to pull together regional ideas about continuing to successfully confront the drug issue, and to do so not just on the basis of intelligence cooperation and judicial cooperation and air and sea interdiction, which are vitally important, but to see it in a larger context of what we think are the major contributions that we started in the Santiago Summit of the Americas. How do we make sure that 34 nations are engaged in this process, and this is not seen as a United States problem that we're cajoling our Latin American partners into participating in? That's where the trip took me, and I will be glad to respond to your own questions.

Chris, the next chart if you will, sir. Why don't you put them all up there so we can run through this a bit quicker.

Source zone strategy. Six years ago we put together PDD 14. I think it was a sound piece of work. I thought so at the time. It suggested you got to do it all; you've got to have a solid domestic law enforcement and interdiction strategy. Yes, you do have to go into the transit zone, the Caribbean, the Eastern Pacific, Central America. We can talk about that. But at the end of the day, the huge payoffs in terms of supply reduction are going where the drugs are produced, and we're doing that worldwide.

But certainly when it comes to cocaine and heroin in the Latin American arena, our eradication concept in Colombia, Peru, Bolivia and Mexico are vital to achieving some goal. And I would just suggest to you, almost to my astonishment it's working, more so than I could have envisioned in the 5-some odd years that I've been

working the issue. With a rather—in terms of the entire national budget, with a rather modest financial investment, we actually every—achieved a net reduction in cocaine in 3 years. And I will go on to talk about that and why it might be jeopardized in the coming years.

When I say we, this is not just the DEA, the Customs Service, the Border Patrol, U.S. Armed Forces, the Agency; a lot of it is the Peruvian Air Force, Colombian National Police, the cooperation of authorities in the Caribbean. It's really been a multinational effort, and it's pretty impressive.

Next chart, Chris.

Let me talk about Peru, because that's clearly the most dramatic successes we've made. Three years, 56 percent reduction in coca under cultivation. It's astonishing, unbelievable what has been achieved. Now, a lot of that was not just the incredible performance of the U.S. Air Force and intelligence services supporting the Peruvian Air Force, it was alternative economic development, it was smart political operation by President Fujimori. It was a defeated Sendero Luminosos. It was a reintroduction of civilian police in the Huallega Valley. It was good eradication operations in the Eberamag valley, but inarguably, that's where they've gone in 3 years.

And for that reason, for the first time in a decade there have been less cocaine floating around the world on a net basis than there were in previous years. That's jeopardized. We're now seeing possibly some bad evidence of the reintroduction of coca planting into the eradicated fields.

A lot of reasons why that may or may not be occurring, one of which is the—as you get production down, the value of the product goes up. More likely the important reason is these drug criminal organizations are so flexible, they're adapting to what we did and are now moving on the rivers, and they're smuggling out in the eastern Pacific by noncommercial shipping. They're getting around what we've achieved. They're out in Brazilian air space. They're making short aircraft hops across the Colombian border. They're moving east into Bolivia instead of north into Colombia. So there's a dynamic process by some very clever and dangerous criminal organizations. But Peru ought to be proud of what it's done.

Next chart. Bolivia. Unusual, I watched this, as have many of you, for a decade. For 7 years we put \$1 billion in there. We achieved enormous increases in legal cultivation. We helped the police and the Army, but we had a zero impact on coca production. In the last 2 years, President Banzer, Vice President Quiroga, this administration has actually reduced coca production 22 percent, and they've done it, thank God, with a human rights equation taken into account, where there has not been massive conflict, armed conflict between the coca-ers and the police and the Army.

Now they ought to be proud of what they've done, but they're also now getting into the heavy lifting, and how well they can proceed will be a challenging concept to them. They've gone out, they asked the Europeans and their global partner for help. But this is another nation that's been on the right track, and one element of it was stiff law enforcement and eradication, very impressive work.

Colombia. A traditional ally, they fought with us in Korea. They are enormously important economic partners, whether it's coffee or flowers or whatever. Literally 30,000 jobs in Florida, as you well know, Mr. Chairman, depend upon trade with Colombia. An honest President, a good government struggling with these huge challenges.

But when you back off of it and look at the global drug threat that they pose, it's a huge problem. And I might add, Mr. Chairman, I would volunteer later on to review the transcript of this hearing. I'll pull together the other actors in the government who watch this issue; let me try and get you a fact sheet. Congressman Reyes I think quite correctly suggested we have got to get on the same set of facts.

I think there's been an awful lot of good sound bites that are well-meaning, but I need to paint the picture as I think it actually is. I say that, because I think Colombia is a dynamic situation, what we've done in the past may not be adequate.

We do need to think through the coming several years. It's going to require a coordinated effort under the leadership of Secretary Albright. I went to her when I got back to lay out my own thinking. She is dispatching Under Secretary Pickering, one of the most distinguished diplomats I've ever worked with. He will go down there on Monday and try and work the issue.

So it's a changing situation, and I welcome, I think all of us welcome, the oversight of Congress and the participation of Congress, but we've got to get the same sheet of facts.

The peace process, the drug issue, the economic problem, they are linked. The peace process is faltering. It's not achieving its purpose. There's been no gesture of goodwill on the part of FARC guerrillas. It's outrageous. They have gone into this, quote, demilitarized zone, cleared zone with thousands of FARC fighters. There's 41 airfields in there. There is some indication there is now coca production in there.

It is a laboratory operation. They are using it as an armed base area, and during the July offensive they came out of that DMZ and attacked the police and the Army as far as 75 kilometers away. They executed 30-some-odd people in the DMZ. They are entering homes in the DMZ; 90,000 Colombians live in there, and they're violating Colombian constitutional law by exercising jurisdiction in the absence of Colombian law. It's a huge problem. And I might add when they attacked the police and the Army, it was a tremendous signal of determination on the part not just of General Seranno, but all the Colombian armed forces. Nobody surrendered. None of these besieged outposts gave up. Many of the Colombian soldiers that were killed were executed while wounded. They were shot in the head.

So this is a huge problem, and yet in saying that, I do not imply that we should do anything but be entirely supportive of continuing to engage on a negotiated—support Pastrana and his colleagues on a negotiated end of the FARC, ELM and paramilitary struggle against the government, but that's a problem in sum right there, and it's spilling over, as I will show in a subsequent chart.

Next. A lot of us should be proud about what we've done in the last 3 and 4 years in the Andean Ridge. I'm not sure what is com-

ing up in the next 3 or 4 years. It looks to me like the dynamic is shifting, and we're now moving in a different direction. The Peruvian cocaine industry is coming back. It's just beginning, and January, when we get our yearlong analysis of the data, I will be able to give you a better overview. But I think it's going in the wrong direction, and I will try and learn more about that toward the end of the month.

Bolivia. Indeed we have done a magnificent piece of work, "we" meaning primarily the Bolivian police and human rights activists and alternate economic development programs. But again, I think the organizations, criminal organizations, have now reneged themselves. The Colombians are gone. The Colombian criminals are out of Bolivia, but Bolivian cocaine production is still going out of country through Argentina, through Brazil, to Europe. A lot of it is in Europe. It's not going up now into Colombia to be turned into HCL. The laboratories are in Bolivia. So it's a different problem and a very serious one, and arguably some tough years are coming up.

And then finally we talked about Colombia, it doesn't need to be repeated.

It's not the source of 80 percent of the cocaine. The facts are that it's a No. 1 cultivation source of coca. And we're seeing an improvement, I might add, in the quality of these coca bushes; the HCL contents going up. It is arguably either 80 percent of the cocaine in America originated in or transited through Colombia is a better way to look at it.

I would also argue that there's six metric tons of heroin, high purity, low cost, now being—as Congressman Cummings accurately pointed out, being dealt, distributed by the same criminal organizations that are there to distribute cocaine, which makes it even worse. That heroin is a new dynamic. It's killing kids from Florida all the way to New York City and Boston. They're sticking it up their nose, thinking because they don't inject it, it's less dangerous probably. Although the extremely good law enforcement work, particularly in Miami and New York City, the seizures are up to 70 percent on the East Coast.

I would argue that does not necessarily mean that's the primary source of heroin. Poor Colombia produces 4 percent of the world's heroin. The majority of it is still produced in two places, Burma and Afghanistan. And one could argue in those two countries the only thing that works is opium production. And that stuff is still coming in—Burmese heroin is all over the United States.

Next. One could argue Colombia is a trafficking center of gravity. There's no question about it, a lot of the laboratories are involved there. The precursor chemicals come into Colombia from—through Venezuela, through Ecuador, directly into Colombia. The money laundering, a lot of it is either orchestrated or takes place in Colombian systems. Clearly the FARC and the ELN and the paramilitary, we've had this long sterile debate over whether to call them narcoguerrillas. I don't know what we ought to call them, but without question, the FARC income depends upon drug production.

They're taxing it at every stage, they call it a tax, the growing of it, the transportation, the laboratories, and so when the Coast Guard and the DEA seize 6 pounds of Colombian cocaine, the FARC already got paid, and that's why you see them in shiny uni-

forms and brand new automatic weapons, and with aircraft and helicopters and international legal talent. It's the center of gravity, we could argue, for gigantic and menacing criminal enterprise.

Next chart. Their neighbors are worried. They ought to be worried. Colombia is incapable of controlling the land area, particularly in the south, Caqueta and Putumayo provinces. When I flew in the combat base at Tres Esquinas, right in the heart of Indian country, and you look out the window, 30 percent of the land area is coca production, and their FARC base area is now operating, particularly in Ecuador, but also across the border into Peru, into Brazil, Brazilian frontier, and in and out of Venezuela land space. And then finally they're clear across the border into Panama and the Darien Peninsula.

I mentioned that not just to indicate the regional nature of the threat, but to underscore the requirement for regional cooperation in solving it, which is one of the reasons that I had gone to the surrounding countries and listened to their own views.

Mr. Chairman, final quick comment, we've got a first-rate CINC in Southern Command General Charlie Wilhelm. The Congress gave us some money to set up United States Southern Command in Miami, the crossroads of Latin America. We've got a problem. We've closed down operations in Panama. As you pointed out, some 2,000 counterdrug flights a year which took place out of Howard Air Force Base, the capability is gone as of May 1st. It was an \$80 million-a-year operation. There were 2,000 airmen there, so that 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, we were supporting the U.S. Customs Service, which has indeed probably the preponderance of counterdrug missions, the U.S. Armed Forces, DEA aircraft, the Agency, Department of Transportation, the Coast Guard tracker aircraft program. Now we're trying to come up with new alternatives.

We're behind the ball on it. We kept negotiating with Panama. We thought we had a solution that was good for the region. We got interim access to Manta, Ecuador, Curacao and Aruba. I believe we're going to be able to put together a first-rate longer-term agreement. There's great receptivity in the region, I think, to continue these cooperative fights.

And I've got to underscore, you know, I was out there with Congressman Reyes at 2 a.m., with the Secretary of the Army, the Chief of Staff of the Army, the old guard, the soldiers of that 204th MI Battalion, to welcome home the first two remains from those five brave young U.S. Army aviators. And the President asked Janet Reno to head the U.S. Delegation that went back to bring in Captain Jennifer Odom, a beautiful young public servant, operational aircraft lost, supporting regional counterdrug mission, and, in my view, directly protecting the safety of the American people. It was a great honor, I know, for Congressman Reyes and I, among others, to have taken part of in that mission.

With your permission, I will end my formal remarks there, and I look forward to responding to your own questions and listening to your own ideas. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. Thank you for 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
The Evolving Drug Threat in Colombia
And other South American Source Zone Nations
August 6, 1999**

Introduction

All of us in the Office of National Drug Control Policy thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify today about the evolving drug threat in Colombia and other South American source-zone nations. 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.

Emerging drug-control challenges in Colombia and the Andean Ridge threaten regional supply-reduction efforts and larger U.S. security interests. Our collective efforts to implement the source-zone strategy laid out in Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 14 have reduced global potential cocaine production by 29 percent over the past three years. It now appears that these important drug-control gains are eroding. CIA global crop estimates for this year (calendar year 1999) may show a large increase in cocaine production potential. The continued explosion of coca cultivation and increases in opium poppy cultivation in Colombia undermine the U.S. source-zone strategy and Colombian democratic institutions. This increase will continue to promote cocaine addiction the world over. Colombia's ability to respond to this emerging drug threat is compromised by interlocking economic, political, and social problems. Meanwhile, U.S. Government efforts to negotiate long-term agreements, to replace expiring interim agreements with Ecuador and Aruba/Curacao, continue. The existing interim agreements allow the U.S. to operate Forward Operation Locations (FOL) to conduct essential multinational anti-drug air operations following the closure of Howard Air Force Base in Panama.

Part I of this testimony provides an overview of current trends in cocaine and heroin cultivation, production, and trafficking with the "source zone" nations of South America -- Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela. Part II addresses the current situation in Colombia. Part III summarizes U.S. Government drug-control programs in South America. Part IV presents U.S. challenges in Colombia and the source zone, and Part V summarizes key issues to be addressed when designing a comprehensive regional strategy for controlling the supply of drugs that enter the United States.

I – Overview of Source Zone Trends

- **Cocaine**

Coca, the raw material for cocaine, is grown in the South American countries of Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru. Regional efforts to eradicate this crop have been quite successful in the past three years. Coca cultivation in Peru plummeted by 56 percent from 115,300 hectares in 1995 to 51,000 hectares in 1998. Potential cocaine production declined from 460 metric tons to 240 metric tons over the same period in Peru while in Bolivia potential production declined from 255 metric tons in 1994 to 150 metric tons in 1998. These successes have been attributed to many factors, including: political will in both countries to confront the illegal drug trade, the regional air interdiction campaign that targeted drug-laden aircraft flying between coca-growing regions of Peru and processing laboratories in Colombia, control of precursor chemicals, diminished strength of insurgent forces in Peru, and alternate crop programs. International drug control successes and shifting markets have forced change on the illicit cocaine industry in Latin America -- a large-scale shift in coca cultivation to Colombia.

Throughout this decade, traffickers have moved over half of U.S.-bound cocaine through Mexico, while Caribbean routes handle about one third of the traffic. Traffickers continue to rapidly shift flow among several Caribbean and eastern Pacific routes in response to successful law enforcement interdiction operations. For example, law enforcement surge operations blocking routes into Puerto Rico have shifted the illicit drug flow to more western routes into Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Transit zone maritime trafficking -- primarily conducted via fishing vessels and multi-engined boats known as "go-fasts" -- remains the predominant means to transport cocaine. The use of non-commercial aircraft for smuggling drugs has decreased over the past few years, but it has remained an important method of shipping cocaine to the Bahamas, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic.

The disruptions of the Colombian Cali drug trafficking organizations in 1995 and 1996 and the earlier dismantlement of the Medellin cartel have created greater opportunities for other trafficking organizations to develop their businesses. The days of highly integrated cartels with centralized control over production, shipment, distribution, and marketing functions are most likely gone, replaced by shifting, temporary agreements and coalitions.

- **Heroin**

Heroin is produced for the world market in nine countries in three regions of the world. Burma and Afghanistan are responsible for ninety percent of the world's opium production, which has almost doubled since 1986. An estimated 3,461 metric tons of opium was produced worldwide in 1998, a 16 percent decline in production between 1997 and 1998 due principally to drought and eradication in Southeast Asia. The Latin American component of this global production has historically accounted for 4 percent or less of worldwide totals.

While only a small portion of the world's heroin supply comes from Latin America, hemispheric production accounts for a disproportionate share of the heroin seized in the United States, according to the DEA Heroin Signature Program (HSP).¹ HSP is based primarily on federal seizures made at U.S. Ports of Entry. For calendar year 1997, DEA reports indicate that Latin American heroin comprised 75 percent of the heroin seized in the United States. Law enforcement investigations, along with various indicator data reflect that the nation's largest heroin markets of New York, Boston, Newark, Baltimore, and Philadelphia are now dominated by the six tons of Colombian heroin produced each year. Mexico produces about 6 metric tons of heroin per year, most of which is sent to the United States and consumed primarily in the western part of our country.

¹ The HSP is a valuable tool to our understanding of the flow of heroin to the United States, however it is based on only seized heroin. Therefore, the HSP cannot be used as the only indicator of origin for heroin available in the United States. Other factors -- such as the prevalence of East Asian poly crime syndicates, or triads, or Nigerian organizations in some cities (for example, Chicago), as well as the origin of heroin seized in nations proximate to the United States (for example, Canada) -- should also be considered. An interagency heroin assessment effort is currently underway to better understand the nature of the increasing heroin threat to our nation.

II – Colombia: An Emergency Situation

- **The changing face of drug trafficking**

The drug trade in Colombia has changed significantly over the past few years. Coca cultivation has increased dramatically in response to regional airbridge interdiction efforts that curtailed the flow of coca products from Peru to Colombia. The cocaine trafficking industry fragmented following the arrests of the Cali drug kingpins in the mid-1990s and is now characterized by smaller groups specializing in limited segments of the drug trade. These groups are more difficult to detect; dismantling any one of them has less impact on the overall trade. A strategic decision by Colombian drug organizations to enter the heroin production/trafficking business has resulted in the proliferation of Colombian heroin within the United States.

Virtually all of the drug-crop cultivation in Colombia is in remote, underdeveloped regions outside the government's control and often under the armed control of guerrilla or paramilitary forces. This makes eradication and interdiction enormously dangerous to security forces. Moreover, without greater protection by the Police and Army in the countryside, the government cannot deliver adequate alternative development programs to provide licit income to growers who abandon coca cultivation.

As opposed to the situation ten years ago when small airplanes were the preferred method of transporting drugs out of Colombia, the majority of drugs today leave Colombia via maritime means, either in containerized cargo or by fast boat. Riverine transport of precursor chemicals into processing regions and of finished drugs coming out has also increased substantially.

- **Exploding cocaine production**

U.S. Government Crop Experts from the Department of Agriculture, Drug Enforcement Administration and Director of Central Intelligence's Crime and Narcotics Center believe Colombian cocaine production may be poised for a dramatic increase in 1999.² Higher yielding coca is being cultivated in Colombia. This has yet to be reflected in annual estimates of potential cocaine production because of the two-year maturation time for the higher yielding variety of coca (*erythroxylum coca* var. *coca*) to become fully productive. Much of the increase in cultivation in Putumayo and western Caqueta -- where the higher yielding variety of coca is most likely being grown -- took place in 1996-97 and those fields are only now becoming fully productive. Colombian Cocaine production this year could reach 250 metric tons even if the amount of coca under cultivation does not increase.

² *Colombian Coca Yields: An Update*, a joint research paper prepared by experts from the DCI Crime and Narcotics Center, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Department of Agriculture. CN 99-40010, February 1999.

- **Colombian penetration of U.S. heroin market**

Colombian drug organizations made a strategic decision at the beginning of this decade to expand into opium cultivation and heroin production and trafficking. As a result, net opium cultivation in Colombia went from essentially zero hectares to more than 6,000 hectares by 1995, and has remained essentially stable since. Opium cultivation is concentrated in the Huila-Tolima area and has a potential yield of six metric tons a year. Unlike Asia, where there is a distinct growing season, cultivation is year round, resulting in multiple crops. Colombian heroin trafficking is reportedly controlled by relatively autonomous groups that have developed their own smuggling systems. The predominant mode of transportation is commercial air, with human courier mules swallowing balloons filled with heroin or hiding it in body cavities.

- **The nexus between drugs and Colombia's civil conflict**

Insurgent and paramilitary organizations are profiting enormously from the drug trade and using drug revenues to finance operations against the democratic government. The growth of drug cultivation, production, and trafficking has added substantially to the war chests of the guerrilla and paramilitary groups, which protect and/or control various aspects of the drug industry. Colombian defense experts have estimated that the two major insurgent groups (the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN)) gain 50 percent or more of their revenues – from their involvement in drug trafficking. Estimates vary widely for the amount of money that the two major insurgent groups (the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN)) earn annually from the drug trade – from a low of \$100 million or less to a high of \$500 million. What is clear is that their revenues from the drug trade equal or exceed their other major income sources – kidnapping, extortion, and bank robberies.³ The FARC, which controls or influences much of southern Colombia, earns revenues by providing protection for or directly participating in activities related to coca cultivation, drug processing facilities, and clandestine airstrips. The FARC also “taxes” the campesinos and drug traffickers at each stage of drug cultivation, production, and transport in areas under their control. The FARC, through attacks on military and Colombian National Police (CNP) logistical bases and outposts, have negatively affected the GOC's aerial eradication efforts. CNP and U.S.-owned aircraft on eradication missions were hit by ground fire in guerrilla-controlled areas 48 times last year.

- **A society under brutal attack**

In Colombia, the melding of guerrilla movements, or in some cases, paramilitary groups, and international drug trafficking organizations has created an unprecedented threat to the rule of law, democratic institutions, and the very fabric of society. More than 35,000 Colombians have been killed over the past decade in Latin America's longest-running internal conflict. There are an estimated 20,000 guerrillas contesting democratic governance. In recent years, paramilitary

³ See for example, *Colombia on the Brink* by Michael Shifter, *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 1999 and *Colombia's Three Wars: U.S. Strategy at the Crossroads*, a Strategic Studies Institute report, Gabriel Marcella and Donald Schulz, March 5, 1999.

organizations have evolved from their origins as self-defense organizations required in the absence of effective law enforcement and the rule of law. Today, they are competing with insurgent organizations and government forces for personnel and control of territory. They are also implicated in an increasing number of politically motivated killings and other gross violations of human rights. In addition to the involvement in the drug industry by guerrilla and paramilitary groups, the acceleration of the deadly spiral of violence in Colombia can be attributed to the 1980s boom in the cocaine industry and the extensive investments in all aspects of Colombia's economy by fabulously wealthy drug traffickers who were seeking to reinvest their fortunes, expand drug cultivation and production, and legitimize their social standing.⁴

Colombia's ability to respond to the exploding drug threat is hindered by interlocking economic, political, social, and security challenges. The national economy is shrinking for the first time in three decades -- GDP shrank by more than 5 percent in the first six months of 1999. Unemployment exceeds 20 percent. Institutions such as the criminal justice system are incapable of ensuring justice will be done, and have lost the public's confidence. The populace, especially in the rural areas, is turning to the guerrillas, paramilitaries, and narcotraffickers for paying jobs. Guerrilla recruits are reportedly paid more than twice as much as Army conscripts. Colombians are emigrating in increasing numbers. Over half a million Colombians left for good in the last two years.

Colombian security forces are presently incapable of conducting counterdrug operations in the Putumayo and find it difficult to conduct operations in the Caqueta growing regions, source of two-thirds of Colombian coca, because of the dangers posed by the guerrillas. Narco-guerrillas have achieved dominance of these regions because of serious shortfalls in training, force structure, leadership, intelligence, mobility, and communications for the armed forces and Police. The series of tactical battlefield defeats suffered by the Armed Forces over the past year caused them to attempt some fundamental reforms. The Armed Forces and Police have had a few recent encouraging successes against the FARC in 1999.

The Colombian Army is now creating a special Counternarcotics Battalion with US Army assistance that will work in support of or in coordination with the CNP in their efforts to move counterdrug operations into the Putumayo region. The members of this unit have been carefully selected, fully vetted, and are being trained and equipped with US support. The GoC has also reinvested in the isolated base at Tres Esquinas in southern Colombia to provide a center of counterdrug operations in the heart of the coca-growing region. Colombia's Joint Task Force - South is located there. Tres Esquinas will also soon be the site of the Joint Intelligence Center which will bring together the counterdrug efforts of all the Colombian military forces and the CNP. Once the runway extension at Tres Esquinas has been completed to handle more types of aircraft, the Colombian Air Force will be able to station additional aircraft there as required in support of police and military counterdrug operations.

Such interservice cooperation is absolutely key to creating security conditions that will make it possible for Colombia's drug eradication, alternative development and law enforcement

⁴ *Colombia's Three Wars: U.S. Strategy at the Crossroads*, pp.14-15.

counterdrug programs to be successful. The 2,500 people who comprise the CNP's Anti-Narcotics Division nationwide are brave and professional, but they are no match for some 17,000 FARC and ELN guerrillas, 6,000 paramilitary members, and hundreds of violent drug traffickers operating in much of Colombia. Tres Esquinas will also serve as a point of departure for counterdrug operations, air interdiction of trafficker flights, and riverine patrolling. Unless the GOC can contest guerrilla dominance in drug-producing regions, cultivation and production will continue to expand, and the guerrilla movement will continue to strengthen as a result of the enormous cash flow to these terrorist organizations.

The Administration is fully supportive of President Pastrana's desire to negotiate with the FARC and the ELN, but his peace initiative has yet to yield any results. Negotiations, scheduled to begin July 7, were postponed by the FARC who launched a nationwide offensive on July 8, from the so-called DMZ again, making a mockery of their commitment to negotiated peace. FARC, ELN, and Paramilitary guerrilla forces continue committing acts of violence against the government and the civilian population, including widespread kidnapping. Among the victims of the violence have been three American civil rights representatives murdered by the FARC while working for the rights of indigenous peoples. Violence, including mass kidnappings in churches and on airline flights, continues at a level that undermines democracy and the rule of law. There are now more than one million displaced people in Colombia.

- **Deteriorating Regional Situation**

Colombia is now clearly the new center of gravity for the cocaine industry. Negative trends also appear to be emerging elsewhere in the region, in some cases perhaps as a result of spillover from Colombia's troubles.

In Peru, the drug control situation is deteriorating. Traffickers have adjusted routes and methods to reduce the effectiveness of law enforcement and interdiction operations. Peruvian coca prices have been rising since March 1998, making alternative development and eradication more difficult. Some farmers are returning to abandoned fields and the central growing areas are rejuvenating. Clearly, rebounding cultivation in Peru would be a setback to U.S. interests.

In Bolivia, continued reductions in cultivation are expected but there is cause for long term concern. The cocaine industry is still intact and prices remain high. Coca growers have instigated many acts of violence. Progress continues to depend on the will of the Banzer Administration to incur considerable political risk to achieve long-term coca reductions and on the availability of sufficient alternative development funds to provide coca farmers with licit income alternatives.

The withdrawal of U.S. counterdrug operations forces from Panama by December 31, 1999 will challenge our ability to maintain adequate levels of support to the hemispheric drug control effort. DoD and DoS must establish a new structure to support forward-based, source zone, counterdrug operations to replace access to Panama facilities. USG efforts to establish Forward Operating Locations for counterdrug air interdiction operations are complicated by the

lack to date of US congressional support to secure the required Overseas Military Construction budget and authority. We also still lack long-term access agreements with the Governments of the Netherlands (for Aruba and Curacao) and Ecuador (for Manta).

Guerrilla units have found sanctuary in Panama's Darien Province and cross the Colombia-Panama border nearly at will. Guerrillas have also been militarily active across the border to Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Peru. An insurgency that once was mostly an internal Colombian problem is now fueled by enormous drug wealth and is gaining regional security significance.

III – The U.S. Source Zone Strategy

- **The imperative for supply reduction**

The rule of law, human rights, and democratic institutions are threatened by drug trafficking and consumption. International supply reduction programs not only reduce the volume of illegal drugs reaching our shores; they also attack international criminal organizations, strengthen democratic institutions, and honor our international drug-control commitments. The U.S. supply-reduction strategy seeks to:

- (1) eliminate illegal drug cultivation and production;
- (2) destroy drug-trafficking organizations;
- (3) interdict drug shipments;
- (4) encourage international cooperation; and
- (5) safeguard democracy, human rights, and respect for the rule of law.

- **A source zone focus**

The United States continues to focus priority international drug-control efforts on source countries. International drug-trafficking organizations and their production and trafficking infrastructures are most concentrated, detectable, and vulnerable to effective law enforcement action in source countries. In addition, the cultivation of coca and opium poppy - - and the production of cocaine and heroin are labor intensive. For these reasons, cultivation and processing are relatively easier to disrupt than other downstream aspects of the trade. The international drug control strategy seeks to bolster source country resources, capabilities, and political will to reduce cultivation, attack production, interdict drug shipments, and disrupt and dismantle trafficking organizations, including their command and control structure and financial underpinnings.⁵

- **The international context in which we operate**

The era in which hemispheric anti-drug efforts were characterized by bilateral initiatives between the United States and selected Latin American and Caribbean nations is gradually giving way to growing multilateral initiatives. The 34 democratic nations in the Americas and the Santiago Summit of The Americas have recognized that the lines demarcating source, transit, and consuming nations have become blurred as drug abuse and drug-production become a shared problem. The growing trend toward greater cooperation in the Western Hemisphere has created unprecedented drug-control opportunities.

⁵ Additional information about international drug-control programs is contained in the *Classified Annex* to the *Strategy*.

The counterdrug institutions required for successful hemispheric cooperation beginning to be established. Many of the requisite multi-national mechanisms and processes are also in place or under development. The anti-drug action agenda signed during the 1994 Miami Summit of the Americas is being implemented. All members of the Organization of American States endorsed the 1995 Buenos Aires Communiqué on Money Laundering and the 1996 Hemispheric Anti-Drug Strategy. The hemisphere's thirty-four democratically elected heads of states agreed during the 1998 Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile to a Hemispheric Alliance Against Drugs. All nations agreed to broaden drug prevention efforts; cooperate in data collection and analysis, prosecutions, and extradition; establish or strengthen anti-money laundering units; and prevent the illicit diversion of chemical precursors. The centerpiece of the agreement is a commitment to create a multilateral evaluation mechanism (MEM) -- essentially, a hemispheric system of performance measurement. Substantial progress was made by the Organization of American States' Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission this past year in developing this evaluation system. Specific performance indicators have been accepted, including requirements for comprehensive national strategies; national laws to combat illegal chemicals, money laundering, and firearms; central coordination government bodies; development of drug-use prevalence surveys; and inventories of prevention and treatment programs.

- **The Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act**

Last year 1998, Congress enacted the Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act (WHDEA) which authorized \$2.7 billion for use by drug control agencies in illicit drug supply reduction activities. The WHDEA included \$565 million in new authority for source country and regional programs and over \$2.1 billion in new authority for the improvement of U.S. transit zone interdiction capabilities. In ONDCP's view, the priorities outlined in the WHDEA generally did not best support the *National Drug Control Strategy*. Some provisions of the Act required investments that exceeded well-articulated agency contingency funding plans. To support the WHDEA, congress appropriated \$844 million for this fiscal year for counterdrug activities.

IV – U.S. Challenges in Colombia and the Source Zone

- **Provide adequate and responsive counterdrug support to the Government of Colombia**

The United States is committed to work with the Government of Colombia to develop a comprehensive response to the enormously increased threats. We are determined to help reestablish the rule of law and allow the development of legitimate economic alternatives to the drug trade. Such support will be limited to counterdrug training, resources, equipment, intelligence, and regional political support operations, as U.S. policy is absolutely to not intervene militarily in Colombia's internal struggle.

Colombia must find a way to: increase its capabilities to conduct counterdrug operations in the Putumayo, Caqueta, and poppy growing areas; improve infrastructure supporting eradication, interdiction, chemical control, and other Colombian counterdrug operations; strengthen the Colombian Joint Task Force-South and its military-police Joint Intelligence Center at Tres Esquinas, increase operational tempo of counterdrug maritime and riverine missions, help develop an effective criminal investigation, prosecution and incarceration capability; improve the economy and provide alternative economic development and negotiate an end to the FARC/ELN Paramilitary violence.

- **Prevent a reversal of counterdrug gains in Bolivia and Peru**

We face the very real possibility of reversal of the dramatic reductions made against the coca industry in Peru. We have seen indications that trafficking organizations are adjusting to the disruptions we've achieved since 1995. Certainly, the increased number of multi-ton seizures in commercial maritime conveyances suggest that this mode of trafficking may be more important than before.

- **Restructure the theater interdiction architecture: establishing forward operating locations**

Over the past decade, the majority of Department of Defense support to the cocaine source country effort was provided from U.S. military facilities in Panama. Over two thousand counterdrug flights per year originated from Howard Air Force Base. This vital facility supported -- operationally and logistically -- interagency detection, monitoring, and tracking operations from the Customs Service, Defense Department, Coast Guard, CIA, and DEA conducted by P-3 Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft, P-3 Counterdrug Upgrade (CDU) aircraft, E-3 AWACs, E-2 early warning aircraft, F-16 fighters, C-550 Citation trackers, and various other aircraft. The U.S. military presence in Panama also supported transit zone interdiction operations, provided facilities for pier-side boarding and destructive searches, supported training in small boat operations and maintenance, and provided jungle operations training for small counterdrug units. The counterdrug capabilities resident in Panama provided significant support to the efforts of the U.S. Customs Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and our many regional partners.

The completed closure of Howard Air Force Base on May 1, 1999 -- as part of the drawdown of U.S. forces in Panama required to be completed by December 31, 1999 -- has caused a serious interruption of source-zone counterdrug air operations. The departments of Defense and State are working to establish Forward Operating Locations (FOLs) in Manta, Ecuador and Aruba/The Netherlands Antilles (Curaçao). Thankfully temporary interim agreements have been reached with Ecuador and The Netherlands. Negotiations are underway for long-term agreements that will allow significant infrastructure improvements to facilitate around-the-clock operations at both locations.

The timely replacement of Howard Air Force Base's counterdrug capabilities is dependent upon a number of key steps that are already either in progress or under coordination. The restoration of full air and sea interdiction coverage will require significant Overseas Military Construction, especially in Ecuador, to improve FOL facilities. Additional legislative authority will be required to obligate FOL upgrade funds. Budget estimates for the establishment of FOLs may be revised after detailed site surveys are completed. The interim agreements with Ecuador and Aruba/Curaçao are scheduled to expire within one year's time. Long-term agreements are still being negotiated.

A concerted U.S. government effort is required over the next eighteen months to ensure that we maintain full support to the *National Drug Control Strategy* as we reestablish our regional counterdrug support infrastructure. This interagency effort must include: long-term agreements with host nations, overseas military construction authority and budgets, and commitment from interagency force providers to maintain an uninterrupted level of effort. The Secretaries of State and Defense have indicated full commitment to ensuring that the necessary steps are taken to bring the FOLs to full operational status. We now need to ensure that all of the other affected elements of the U.S. government are similarly prepared to support this FOL plan. We cannot afford a long-term degradation of detection and monitoring capabilities over the Andean Ridge, Caribbean and Eastern Pacific trafficking routes.

V – Personal Observations

It is so important to clearly understand what is happening in the principal coca producing and transit countries. I traveled to Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela - - as well as Curacao and Aruba last week. My mission was to share US ideas on regional drug cooperation and gauge the capacity and the will of the Andean countries to act decisively against the widening threat. President Pastrana of Colombia, President Mahuad of Ecuador, President Chavez of Venezuela, Prime Minister Camelia-Romer of Curacao, and Prime Minister Eman of Aruba all received me. They do understand the seriousness of the threat posed by drug traffickers, guerrilla/terrorists and paramilitary/terrorist gangs. These nations face the direct tragedy of displaced persons, violent death, kidnapping and other abuses. All of the drug producing and transit countries also face economic disruption brought on by lack of confidence and the erosion of government institutions through corruption.

The will to cooperate against the illegal drug industry is strong. However, the police, military, judicial and intelligence capacity to act in a meaningful way is weak. The Andean emergency is multi-dimensional. In my judgement its solution will require regional cooperation for political, economic, law enforcement, and military action. The crisis will not be solved by a solely military response.

Colombia's President Pastrana and Commander of the Armed Forces, General Tapias, told me of their plans to move aggressively to control coca and cocaine production in Colombia's southern departments of Putumayo and Caqueta. There is presently only minimal coca eradication taking place in the south because it is too dangerous. The region is largely under control of various fronts of the FARC, which is solidly in control of drug production and movement.

Colombia is preparing the kind of military counterdrug force it needs to move into the southern coca-growing areas to provide security for the National Police. I had the privilege of visiting the young soliders who are training with the Colombian Army's new counterdrug battalion in Tolemaida. By the Spring they will be based at Tres Esquinas, the stepping off point for operations into the heart of coca-growing territory. These soldiers are learning the skills they need to take and secure an area for the police. They also are getting thorough training in respect for human rights. They are taught how to behave lawfully in realistic combat situations when they will need to make rapid judgments under considerable pressure. We believe this training will payoff in combat. The Colombian military has substantially improved its human rights record. The FARC, ELN, and paramilitaries continue to commit atrocities. The FARC continues its habit of enforcing its orders at gunpoint and carrying out summary executions in the civilian population.

Defense Minister Ramirez stated that Colombia is building the type of army it needs. They intend to develop more soldiers of the same quality as are being trained for the counterdrug battalion. General Tapias told us that to be effective in Tres Esquinas, Colombia desperately needs air mobility. The FARC operates in a huge geographic area. It is clear that a point defense

system is nearly useless. The U.S. strategy must be to support the peace process with our Colombian partners by providing appropriate training, equipment, intelligence, and resources (to include alternative economic development.)

CONCLUSION

Experience teaches that countries which enjoy political, economic, and social stability derived from effective democratic institutions are most capable of mounting coherent policies to reduce drug cultivation, production, trafficking and money laundering. U.S. international counterdrug assistance must continue to be carefully coordinated by our Ambassadors to ensure that drug-policy objectives support U.S. foreign policy goals of promoting democracy and protecting human rights. In many instances, such US assistance must take the form of building military social and political institutions that further democratic governance while confronting the drug trade.

The recent operational loss of a U.S. Army reconnaissance aircraft in Colombia - - and the death of five U.S. Army crew members and two Colombian Air Force riders - - is a reminder of the real dangers inherent in confronting criminal international drug organizations. The men and women in the Department of Defense, Coast Guard, Customs Service and DEA who risk their lives for our national security. We appreciate their efforts. In August 1994 we also mourned the loss of five DEA special agents who were killed in a plane crash during a reconnaissance mission near Santa Lucia, Peru.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Mink we thank you, the rest of the Committee, and the Congress as a whole for the bipartisan support you have provided our drug-control efforts in the Western Hemisphere. Your support has been essential to the progress we achieved over the past three years in reducing coca cultivation and cocaine production in Bolivia and Peru. With your continued support we can stand by courageous and dedicated Colombians who at great personal risk share our commitment to confronting criminal drug organizations and the devastation they cause to the international community.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Mr. MICA. I will start with just a couple of questions, if I may. You've been quoted as saying the line between counternarcotics and counterinsurgency in Colombia no longer exists. I notice that last week President Pastrana played that down a bit. Do you believe that's the situation, and your having been there, is there any reason that President Pastrana would make those comments?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, President Pastrana is a good man, and he's accountable to history for achieving peace in Colombia. And to be blunt, I'm accountable to the American people to protect them in the drug menace. I believe the only way to do that is in cooperation with our regional partners. So it's just a matter of perspective.

There is no factual argument that without 25,000 or so FARC, ELN and paramilitary guerillas, this gigantic explosion in drug production in Colombia could not exist. And the Colombian police are not capable with 4,500 members at Danta in interdicting and interceding in these coca-producing regions. They've got to have the Colombian armed forces stand them with them.

I think it is a difference in perspectives and possibly semantics, but he's got to deal with these people.

Mr. MICA. But there's no division in your mind between counternarcotics and counterinsurgency?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I don't think I would go that far. I think there is a distinction, but they're all related issues. The spiralling economy, the peace process, and the guerilla violence and the drug issue are all fueled by hundreds of millions of dollars from coca production and opium.

Mr. MICA. One of the problems that we've had is getting equipment to Colombia. The Congress last year appropriated \$280 million, and you've heard testimony today about helicopters on tarmacs, equipment not getting there. I met with the Vice President of Colombia, I believe it was last week, when he was in Washington, and we still seem incapable of getting that equipment to that area.

Could you tell us of the \$280 million that we appropriated what's there?

General MCCAFFREY. Let me—I think that's one of the areas that bothered me, you know, obviously, since Secretary Randy Beers and Brian Sheridan and others who are here to testify can with great, you know, knowledge of the issue talk to you about it, and I would be glad to give you a report.

Mr. MICA. Would you give us an estimate?

General MCCAFFREY. Let me, if I can—

Mr. MICA. Our staff has reviewed it, and they find only a few millions of dollars in equipment out of the \$280. The press continues to report that Colombia is now the third largest recipient of aid.

General MCCAFFREY. Yeah.

Mr. MICA. Actually that is only in the money that's appropriated this year, and very few of those dollars our investigation indicates that have actually gotten there.

General MCCAFFREY. Mr. Chairman, if I can, rather than go to which four helicopters on which day, let me go to how I've watched it over the last 5 years. We—for example, in a statement made

there's no Black Hawks there, it's just simply not the case. There's 7 Black Hawks there in the Army, and there's 13 there in the Air Force. There's six more going in for the police. There will be there in October and March, you know—this best aircraft on the face of the Earth is the Black Hawk. It's being modified to reach Seranno's specifications.

There are, if you will, Mr. Chairman, there are six Bell 212 helicopters have been provided to CNP. Only two are currently operating. One was damaged in a hard landing; one destroyed in an accident. Of the remaining four, two are in maintenance. There are an additional eight going in darn quick, four more in August, four more in October.

Mr. MICA. The Hueys are with the military? Blackhawks?

General MCCAFFREY. There are seven with the Army. There are 13 with the Air Force. There are six more going into the police. There is an Army 7th group training session. The counter-narcotics battalion at Tormita actually is being equipped and trained and U.S. trainers are there. I think it's inaccurate to get the impression that there isn't—Colombia is the third largest recipient of foreign aid on the face of the Earth. There are a lot of people down there trying to make that happen.

Mr. MICA. But again, only \$7 million in this recent appropriations that we did in a supplemental was last year. The equipment is actually there. We have been trying to get, I quote Mr. Hannah from 1997, the Hueys to the Colombian National Police. Mr. Reyes pointed out about the decertification. We could have decertified with a waiver which we recommended, which would have allowed us to get that equipment there. So what we have is we have appropriated money but the actual resources have not gotten to those who are—and the dispute in the Congress or among folks here has been not providing the military equipment to the military. It has been the military have it. The police who are conducting the bulk of the antinarcotics effort don't have it.

General MCCAFFREY. I don't think that's accurate. When I went to Colombia 6 months ago, I got aboard Army Blackhawks and flew out to the combat base in Guaviare with NAS-supported helicopters moving Colombian police. I think there is a big problem, potted radars being produced, Blackhawks being produced and modified. Maybe it was inadequately done, but there is a lot of stuff there. There is trainers on the ground.

Mr. MICA. General, we are just trying to get that equipment to where it can effectively do the job, to solicit your assistance. Finally, one question on the forward operating locations. Our surveillance, which has closed down, there were 15,000 flights and 2,000 personnel. All of that stopped in Panama.

General MCCAFFREY. 2,000 flights.

Mr. MICA. No, we have 15,000 flights.

General MCCAFFREY. I don't know where you got that.

Mr. MICA. That is the information we were given.

General MCCAFFREY. I ran the programs. 15,000 flights is ludicrous. I don't know where that number came from, whatever the number is.

Mr. MICA. We won't debate that. Again, we are using the figures given to us by the Southern Command and others. In any event,

what percentage of flights are now being conducted? We sent staff there about a month ago and staff found about one third of the flights were being conducted that were previously conducted. You could give us Manta and also Curacao.

General McCaffrey. That's where you have to be careful what sound bites you use. If you take all of the flights flown in the region during the month of June—listen to me, this is factually accurate—it is 122 percent of the flights flown during the same period a year earlier. What is deceptive about that is most of those flights are flown in the transit zone, Caribbean. We can support the Caribbean just as effectively out of McDill Air Force base as we could out of Panama. The problem is the source zone region. That's been a huge decrease. But even then we got into Manta and we got into Curacao and Aruba and were flying from all three locations.

Mr. MICA. What percentage of flights?

General McCaffrey. Well, the source zone I think has gone way down. Part of that was tied up in Kosovo. We lost a lot of these Intel aircraft, AWACs were all redeployed to fight the air war in Kosovo. But I think we have a challenge. We have got to get infrastructure support from Manta, Curacao, and Aruba. We have got to get cooperation from regional authorities, or we will have a problem supporting the source zone. You are quite correct.

Mr. MICA. Thank you, General. Just as I conclude, let me submit for the record the helicopter that was shot down in the video was shot down at 18:38 to 18:40. It was right at dusk. It was with an infrared camera, so that's the exact time on that. Mr. Reyes has also asked about a balanced approach. I would like to submit for the record these charts which show Federal spending on international, which is source country, which was decimated, cut about 50 percent we see during the beginning of this administration. Only now, and if you look here, are we getting back to the equivalent of 1991 to 1992 dollars.

Federal spending for interdiction was cut. Interdiction decreased 51 percent, international funding levels fell 56 percent from 1992 to 1995, and for the record to look at the balance from 1991 to 1999, we have more than doubled, approximately doubled, the treatment money.

I just wanted to submit those for the record so that we can, and possibly there would be some dispute about these, but we were given these statistics from GAO reports, create a balanced approach and look at what our strategy would be.

I would like to yield now to the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. BURTON. Mr. Chairman, would you like to go ahead and recognize one of the Democrats first and then I will be—

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, since I have to go into another briefing, I would welcome it if you would give me the opportunity to ask some brief questions.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I have absolutely no problem with that.

Mr. MICA. Then we will go right back to you.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Yes, and I want to thank Mr. Burton for your courtesy.

Mr. GILMAN. I thank the gentleman. I thank the gentleman for yielding. General McCaffrey, we want to commend you for saying what Colombia needs now is \$1 billion regional proposal. But

where is the White House on this? I haven't seen any budgetary requests for that. I haven't seen any spelling out of the details nor the implementation of your proposal. We would welcome hearing about that.

General MCCAFFREY. Mr. Chairman, if I can correct you, I don't have a \$1 billion proposal for Colombia. What I have got is a discussion paper that I put out about 3 weeks ago to all 14 of the President's Cabinet officers. It's a \$1 billion package for regional drug issues. It goes to Peru, Bolivia, Colombian, the Caribbean, et cetera. It's not just military police aid; it is also alternative economic development, support for judicial training, and infrastructure. That discussion paper I think needs to be addressed. I was privileged to brief the Cabinet very succinctly on our concerns. I have seen the Secretary of State, so I think we are going to have to look at this very dynamic situation in the coming months. We have got a challenge on the budget. No question.

Mr. GILMAN. General McCaffrey, when will we get beyond the discussion stage and just the proposal stage? If we are going to really help, when are we going to provide the kind of funding that is needed and the resources that are needed?

General MCCAFFREY. Mr. Chairman, let me, if I may, challenge all of us, because I really welcome your involvement in this thing. We sent over an INL budget. The Senate cut it by 27 percent. The House just cut the INL budget by 10 percent. We have got earmarking of money in the House for three A-10 tank killing aircraft as crop spraying planes. We haven't—you haven't funded, the administration hasn't funded—

Mr. GILMAN. If I might interrupt you, what—the House and Senate have complied even with more funding and resources than the administration requested. According to ONDCP 1999 budget, \$48 million was budgeted for Colombia in fiscal year 1998; yet the administration only requested \$30 million in fiscal year 1999. That represents a 37 percent decrease in the request in just 1 year. Why has there been such a significant decrease request? In addition to the \$30 million for Colombia in fiscal year 1999, Congress passed an emergency supplemental appropriations bill which brought the total allocations for Colombia last year to about \$256 million according to ONDCP figures. Yet your fiscal year 2000 budget request for Colombia was only \$40 million this year.

Now, you are talking about a \$1 billion emergency counter-drug including 600 million for Colombia. So you have now gone from \$40 million request to over \$600 million in just 6 months. Why all of these discrepancies? Don't point the finger to the Congress. We are asking the administration, why aren't you coming forward to meet the crisis with the proper funding?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, Mr. Gilman, here is the answer. Fiscal year 2000 request for international programs were \$637 million. That is a 4 percent increase over last year's requested amount. I do think it's an appropriate question to ask, why did the House and the Senate both cut the INL budget we sent over here. I don't understand how we can be doing one thing and talking another. I do believe that we need a new look at the region. If you will allow me to answer your question, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. The House just passed \$285 million for INL antinarcotics efforts.

General MCCAFFREY. Mr. Chairman, you get to ask the question, but you have got to allow me to respond to them.

Mr. GILMAN. Your figures are wrong. We have accommodated the White House request for the antidrug funding for INL. We passed it.

General MCCAFFREY. Actually, Mr. Chairman, the figures are quite correct. I think you are taking a bite out of them, which I believe deserves a respectful response. But in fact there is a 4 percent increase in INL budgets in fiscal year 2000, which has not been acted on by the U.S. Congress. Now, I am also going to propose a new look at the whole region. I will get an answer out of the Government when they sort it out, these conflicting peace process, economic challenge, and drug problems. We do require a new look at it. That's why I welcome your involvement. But I do believe that you ought to give us the money that was in the INL budget. That's really what I am trying to put on the budget.

Mr. GILMAN. General McCaffrey, if we have such a crisis confronting us, why isn't the administration asking for additional funds to meet this crisis instead of just a paper talking about some regional approach?

Let me move to address another area. With regard to Panama and regard to Howard Air Force Base, we were engaged with the foreign affairs directorate in Panama before we closed the base. They were anxious to keep us there. Then they got caught up in politics. Now we understand that the new President of Panama is willing to discuss further negotiations in keeping Howard Air Force Base instead of advertising Howard Air Force Base for sale to a private developer.

Now we are hearing just recently that there is an ammunition shortage in Colombia primarily because Howard Air Force Base has been closed that used to supply the ammo. Right now they have a critical ammo problem. What I am asking truly is what can we do to reopen Howard Air Force Base by negotiations with an administration in Panama that is interested in doing that?

General MCCAFFREY. I certainly share your dismay that those negotiations didn't come out positively. We clearly were suiting the needs of the region. It was better for U.S. national interests. It was better for Panama, and I think it is a great disappointment. We negotiated in good faith. We had a first-rate performance, in my view, by Ambassador McNamara and the United States Ambassador to Panama. It's a shame that's what happened. In the short run, I think we are out of Panama. It's a closed question.

The new administration down there, when he gets in office, perhaps then we ought to let them think through what they want to achieve. But I think our CinC has got a decent way of dealing with the problem. If we can get into Manta, Ecuador, with an FOL and also into Curacao and Aruba and locate a third FOL that can watch the eastern Pacific, and Panama is not the only option, we will be able to satisfy our regional counter-air requirements. I think President Balladares turned off the process. Until he is out of office and this new administration can look at it, I don't believe that it's fruitful to pursue that.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, General.

Mr. MICA. I would like to recognize now Mr. Cummings from Maryland.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First of all, let me say this, General McCaffrey. As you know, I really appreciate what you are doing. It seems like it all depends on what day you appear here. Some days we think that you are the greatest thing since ice cream, and other days it's like a slam dunk against you. But the fact is that I do believe—and I know that you know this—that on this day when the Congress is basically out of session, for a total of 10 or 12 Members to remain here to deal with this issue, it means that all of us are very concerned about this, as I know you share our views and our feelings and our passion about trying to rid our country of, if not our world of, this drug problem.

In that light, you sent a letter—first of all, let's go back to these helicopters. We spent a phenomenal amount of time on these helicopters. It sounded as if—I know that we have got some people from State, but I want to first of all figure out what role you play in all of this. You have a strategy for Colombia, is that right, pretty much?

General MCCAFFREY. I think the Colombians have a strategy for Colombia. We are trying to figure out how to support it effectively.

Mr. CUMMINGS. These helicopters, do you see them as a very important part of the strategy there in Colombia?

General MCCAFFREY. I think there is no question. Mobility for the police and the Army is probably one of the greatest tools we could give them in the short run.

Mr. CUMMINGS. One of the things that you said, you were talking about General Serrano. You said something that kind of caught my ear. You said something about one of the problems was trying to get helicopters to meet certain specifications of General Serrano. I know that we may have testimony later on about this, but can you elaborate a little bit on that?

General MCCAFFREY. It's been a very complex issue. For example, I probably ought to clear up that I owe Mr. Burton a response to his very legitimate concern about why would I apparently be supporting the Blackhawks but writing a letter to not support the Blackhawks. At one point 1½ years ago, Congress said let's give six Blackhawks to the Colombian police, but the money was going to come out of the existing INL budget, which to me was a disaster. It would have immediately stopped two-thirds of our support to Bolivia. So I opposed that course of action. And, oh, by the way, the Colombians hadn't budgeted for those Blackhawk flying hours. So they would have stood down in my view the majority of their Huey helicopters. So I said that's no good and I wouldn't support it.

Congress last year in the supplemental provided enough money to pay for the training, the OPTEMPO, et cetera, at which point I said OK it's a contribution. I also would tell you, I think our support for mobility so far has been marginal. This is sort of on the edge. There are 240,000 police-army, 25,000 for KLN and paramilitary guerillas, six helicopters. This is not significant.

Mr. CUMMINGS. But you don't have a problem with us getting these helicopters? You are not pulling my time on me, are you, Mr. Chairman?

General MCCAFFREY. No, I think we absolutely support it. We absolutely support it.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I thought my chairman wanted to stop me. I just want him to know that I didn't have my 5 minutes.

General MCCAFFREY. Your light is OK, Mr. Congressman. I don't know about—

Mr. CUMMINGS. Let me just finish here. You sent a letter on July 13 to Secretary Albright. You talk about the fact that we had a—that the aid to Colombia was, “inadequate to deal with the enormous internal threats.”

There seems to be some question as to what that was all about and how did you come to this revelation. Can you address that for us? Then you had specific requests, and we want to know what her response was.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think it's premature, to be blunt. That was me laying down a marker suggesting—I know, for example, there is an idea floating around in Congress of \$940 million of support for Colombia. I tried to pull together some good thinking as a discussion paper, not only to the Secretary of State but others involved in this and said let's relook at a dynamic situation that is going in the wrong direction. I think that's exactly what is taking place. The administration will look through the threat as it has evolved and try to sort out what to do and we will consult with Congress. But we don't have an idea on the table, OMB approved, yet to come down here and present to you.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. I would like to recognize the chairman of the full committee, Mr. Burton.

Mr. BURTON. General McCaffrey, according to news accounts in Colombia 1997, you said you supported Blackhawk helicopters for the Colombian National Police, as you have stated here today. Days later in Washington, DC, you opposed counter-narcotics aid to Colombia and you wrote that Blackhawks would threaten to undermine the objectives of the United States international counter-drug policy.

Why did you have those two conflicting positions in just such a short period of time?

General MCCAFFREY. Mr. Burton, I just answered that question. You were involved in the discussion. Let me repeat it if I may.

Mr. BURTON. I appreciate that.

General MCCAFFREY. I just answered the question 2 minutes ago. Let me again lay it out.

I do support mobility for the police and the Army. That's unquestioned. What happened was we had a proposal where we would pay for six helicopters for the Colombian police out of the existing INL budget, which would have reduced the Bolivian counter-drug aid by two-thirds that year. That was a disaster for the U.S. Government, so I opposed it and I provided a letter to that effect.

Now, later when we got the supplemental out of Congress, which I think basically is a pretty good piece of work, it was done too hurriedly. It wasn't thought through adequately, but it was a pretty

good piece of work. Congress provided the money for the Blackhawks, the training, the spare parts, and the OPTEMPO.

If we had taken those six Blackhawks and put them there, minus funding from the Colombian Government—I might add they did not budget for the operation of those aircraft—we would have stood down every NAS Huey helicopter. We can't have, in my view, congressional staffs micro-managing the Colombian police and air force. They are not qualified to do it. We ought to make the Colombians think through it. Let other CinC work with the people who are doing that and present some coherent plan, which is what we owe you.

Mr. BURTON. General McCaffrey, it isn't our staff. I talked to General Serrano personally, and I looked him in the eye much closer than we are. He said, why are we being promised these helicopters and why aren't they being delivered? You promised 40 helicopters. They are not down there.

And you said, well, we have got to be real careful because we are going to hurt Bolivia if we take that money away. The fact of the matter is we now have a situation that is virtually out of control and you are saying, OK, we have got to do something about that. In 1997 and 1998, nothing was done. In Congress, you said that Chairman Gilman and I were micro-managing, trying to micro-manage it.

The fact is we were talking to General Serrano on a frequent basis. Our staffs were going down there on a frequent basis to see what was being done and nothing was being done. We have got junk helicopters down there. We have got 4,000 Colombian National Police being killed. They are now negotiating from a position of weakness with the FARC guerillas because we haven't done anything. Now, all of a sudden with bravado, you are coming up here saying, oh, yeah, we are really going to sock it to them and we are going to do something.

Why didn't we do it before?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I would suggest that we—I couldn't agree with you more. We need to relook the Colombian problem. I think that you are right. I look forward to hearing your own ideas. An enormous amount has been done. We have the third largest recipient of U.S. aid on the face of the Earth. There is a huge embassy and military effort going on to support, where appropriate, training, equipment, intelligence cooperation. But I welcome your own ideas, Mr. Chairman, and we will try to support your thinking.

Mr. BURTON. We will try to work with you. Let me just say that I want to set the record straight on a few issues. The reason we earmark funds for INL is because there are 40 helicopters that have not been delivered. INL has been fully funded and we are the reason for it here in the House. We are the reason that the Senate added that \$70 million to INL's budget. Earmarking was necessary to make sure that those helicopters got down there because we didn't—

General MCCAFFREY. This is the fiscal year 2000 budget, Mr. Chairman? Because that's just not the case.

Mr. BURTON. Fiscal year 1998.

General MCCAFFREY. Fiscal year 2000 is the budget that I am talking about. The one on the Hill, the House did not fund it and neither did the Senate.

Mr. BURTON. Let me give you the facts as I see them: one, last year after administration cuts in source country programs totaling more than \$1 billion in 1993, 1994, 1995, and 1996, Congress acted decisively. Two, last year Denny Hastert, the Speaker of the House, led a congressional effort to put \$690 million into source country programs as the first year of a 3-year effort to fund the Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act. Of that amount—that's law. But note, very little of that aid is yet in Colombia, that \$690 million.

No. 2, this year despite all of our efforts, despite the U.S. Congress putting forward the crucial 3-year western Hemisphere act, despite clear signals that we will support aid to Colombia, the President asked for zero money for this year's tranche of the western hemisphere Western Elimination Act. We wanted to fund it. We gave \$690 million for it. This year in the President's request, zippo.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. I thank the chairman of the full committee. I am now pleased to recognize Mr. Reyes.

Mr. REYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, General McCaffrey. I appreciate your tendering and trying to handle some of the questions because, frankly, there are a lot of issues that from my perspective are up in the air. I would look forward and encourage you to come up with some specific facts that we can all look at so that we can sort things out.

I think ultimately the ones that pay the price are those five soldiers that you and I participated in those ceremonies. Part of what I think is frustrating, at least for me, is the fact that we do what I call political jousting in some of these issues. When we talk about not fully funding the INL money; when we talk about the Senate still not confirming the State Department official in charge of North American relations; when we talk about the kinds of things that we are dealing with as we try to address drug trafficking on an international level, and also on a domestic level, part of the frustration that I think we all share regardless of political perspective has to be a clear understanding of what our strategy is.

I think that—again predicated on my background and alluding to the comments of my colleague on the other side of the aisle on this committee where he was trying to differentiate how this is different from Vietnam, I would submit that we are engaged—I spent 13 months in Vietnam and I know that you are also a veteran of Vietnam. Part of the frustration that I see us participating in and fermenting is the fact that we are doing the same kinds of things that occurred in Vietnam, that is, we are interjecting politics when we should be supporting an all-out effort that ultimately will make a difference in keeping narcotics from our neighborhoods and addressing the issue of how much is coming across the border and from where. Having spent 26½ years doing that, of my life doing that, I think it's critical and vital that we work together.

I have a couple of questions for you, General. One of them has to do with more the domestic; yet it's related to the international.

What is the status on your proposal for the border czar? I think if we are going to be able to have a clear understanding of our strategy, we have to start with the strategy that calls for coordination. When we are talking about our southern border, where the challenge is, as far as I am concerned and based on my experience, we have to be paying attention to coordination. We have to provide the kind of support to our various agencies and our various assets that are involved in this to be able to maximize and give them the best kind of support, both political and otherwise. Can you tell me, what is the status of your proposal?

General MCCAFFREY. Mr. Congressman, I think there is some interim good news. There are 15,000 Federal agents involved in the defense of the southwest border, a \$2 billion operation. Thanks to bipartisan support in Congress, we have dramatically increased the resources; the manpower of the Border Patrol; the amount of technology going into the Customs Service. The coordination with Mexico, while imperfect, has improved.

The Customs and INL have come up with a notion called BCI, Better Coordinated Action, at these 39 ports of entry. I think arguably our intelligence flow to support Federal law enforcement on the border is better. Our HIDTA, High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program, on the five southwest border HIDTAs is, I think, more effective than it was 2 years ago. At the same time, I must admit that I think we need a renewed discussion inside the administration so that there is a better integration of the four major departments of the Federal Government who work on border issues.

I have argued for a southwest border coordinating official possibly to be collocated at El Paso, with EPIC, joint task force six, and Alliance. I think there is a strong logic to persuade my colleagues of that and we need to continue that debate.

Mr. REYES. Thank you, General. Very quickly, can you address the issue of the School of the Americas? We fight this battle every year. It seems to me that the mission of the School of the Americas is critical and vital to the context of the conversation that we are having here this morning in this hearing.

General MCCAFFREY. I wrote some letters over here to support the School of the Americas along with two of the people whose judgment I most trust in Government, Mr. Tom Pickering and Mr. Walt Slocum in State and DOD along with the secretary of the Army and others. The School of the Americas is an enormous contribution, in my judgment, to allowing, in a Spanish-language environment, military and police officials from throughout the 34 democratic nations to come together and train on a common U.S. Army doctrine basis.

I think that it's made a tremendous gift of professionalizing and making more responsive to democracy the rule of law of the military forces. It's been going on essentially since the early 1950's. There were problems with some of the graduates during the ideological wars of the 1970's in Central America and South America. I think it's a great gift to the hemisphere.

I also, to be honest, find that the criticism is not only 10 years out of date, it's insulting to the current leadership, uniformed leadership of the U.S. Army. That school at Fort Benning is under the same inspector general rule of law, congressional oversight that

any other U.S. Army installation has to respond to. I think the American people properly have a lot of confidence in the Army's leadership.

I think that we have got an old argument dragging us back to the 1970's when we need to look at the future. And the School of the Americas as well as the Air Force school in El Paso—have I got it right? El Paso or San Antonio, excuse me, and the Navy's efforts are all tremendous contributions to the drug mission, also.

Mr. REYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. I will recognize our vice chairman, the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Barr.

Mr. BARR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General, you mentioned briefly in your opening remarks about the policies that Peru has implemented which resulted in a very, very marked decrease in the drugs coming out of that country. Could you just very briefly tell us what is the current status of the Peruvian shoot-down policy.

General MCCAFFREY. They actually—I ought to be careful and not use classified information in public. The numbers are relevant. The Peruvians still have a shoot-down policy. Their air force is still committed. We are still providing the intelligence. Basically, it is sort of still working if you look at it from a narrow perspective of air interdiction in the growing fields. The problems is that drug criminals changed their systems so now they are moving short air hops, they are using the river systems, and there is some argument that we are seeing new coca planting occurring in the formerly eradicated areas. They are also moving out into Brazilian airspace, and they are also using ground smuggling out of Peru and into Bolivia.

Mr. BARR. I understand that. I just wanted to understand, does the Peruvian Government still have the shoot-down policy?

General MCCAFFREY. Absolutely.

Mr. BARR. By the way, I appreciate your comments on the School of the Americas. I think there was a very unfortunate amount of misinformation that was used in the floor debate, and I hope that you will help us to try to correct that mistake that was made by the House.

With regard to the way that we characterize the situation down in Colombia, and as I mentioned earlier, I am glad to see the State Department is recognizing there is a narcoterrorist threat or a narcoguerrilla threat, that there is indeed a very, very profound and deep relationship between narcotics trafficking and the destabilizing terrorist and guerrilla activity. I was somewhat surprised, though, in a recent story to see the Colombian President denying the FARC or narcoguerrillas. How would you account for that? Does the President there just not get it? Does this reflect fear on his part, some sort of policy decision? Clearly, they are narcoguerrillas or narcoterrorists. Why would the President of Colombia be hesitant to recognize that?

General MCCAFFREY. I think first of all, Mr. Pastrana is trying to keep peace. And so he has got to deal with these people. He is trying to set up a dialog. I am very respectful of the problems he faces—

Mr. BARR. I presume it is not the way that you would go about negotiating, giving away all of your chips up front?

General MCCAFFREY. I would prefer to not argue about their name and to say that there is no argument that there is \$200 million or more going from coca production into the FARC. That is where the machine guns, the mortars, the legal talent, the corruption, the violence affecting Colombian society and our own is flowing from.

Mr. BARR. I don't want to get into an argument now. I don't think that fundamentally you and I disagree on this. It is not just a question of semantics. It's a recognition of what the problem is.

General MCCAFFREY. I meant his semantics.

Mr. BARR. If we have people that say, OK, we have a narcotics problem and let's deal with that; OK, we have a guerrilla problem, let's deal with that, we are not recognizing that there is a problem here and that the sum of its parts is much worse than the individual parts themselves.

The proposal that you circulated in the administration last month on the 13th, the discussion paper, recommending \$1 billion in emergency counter-drug budget enhancements, do others in the administration and specifically—because I agree with you, and I want to be very supportive of that—but do others in the administration, including specifically if you could address this, the President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, DCI, and the national security advisor, do they share your view that the situation in Colombia is an emergency, and will they be supportive of requesting emergency funds to address it?

General MCCAFFREY. I think there is no question that there is a broad-gauged feeling on all my partners that there is an emergency situation.

Mr. BARR. I really want to be very specific. Do those named individuals, the President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, DCI, and national security advisor, not generically or as a group, do they share—because I know you have talked with them about this.

General MCCAFFREY. They do share a feeling we have an emergency situation in Colombia and it requires a broad-gauge response which may require additional resources. Now, we have got to sort that out and end up with a sensible plan to send to Congress.

Mr. BARR. As you sit here today, would you tell us whether you are optimistic or pessimistic that your views will prevail?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I am optimistic that—

Mr. BARR. I hope they do, but—

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. That the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, Secretary Slater and others, all of whom have a piece of this, are seriously looking at the issue. We put a tremendous amount of resources in there already. But the dynamics have changed. Now, we have got to sort out what do we do to support the peace process, the economy, and the drug effort.

Mr. BARR. Do you think that you will prevail in getting them to agree, not just that there is an emergency down there, but they will request and support your request for emergency funds?

General MCCAFFREY. First of all, there is no request on the table yet. I am trying to pull together a conceptual agreement among the administration. That includes I might add, I have got to go consult

with the leadership in Brazil, Bolivia, and Peru. This is a regional problem, not just a Colombian problem. That's the other thing that we have to remind ourselves. At the end of the day, I hope that we will continue to evolve a policy that meets the requirements. And it is an emergency requirement, there is no question.

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

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

Mr. SOUDER. Venezuela is our No. 1 supplier of oil to America, far more than anywhere in the Middle East. A lot of people don't realize that. Much of its border with the Colombian Government now doesn't, in fact, control. Colombia is the second, I think, in oil by-products to our country. You mentioned earlier in your testimony the problems with, particularly, in the Panama Canal and the FARC and the narcotraffickers have moved into the Darien potentially with Panama not really having the resources with which to defend itself. We already have the financial people moving into Panama.

I heard you testify on different committees on the drug problems in our high schools and our cities. There is no question that drugs are a huge killer in America. Do you believe that the crisis we are currently facing, with possibly a destabilization of Colombia or at least a dividing of the country where many of the borders could not be controlled, is as great a threat to our country as Kosovo?

General MCCAFFREY. I pretty much admired your earlier comment about why this isn't Vietnam. I think this argument by analogy gets us into trouble. Let me take Kosovo off the table. I did that 5 years ago. Let me, if I can, just get to the part of your concern in Colombia. I showed a chart that essentially suggests, I think accurately, that if you are looking for the serpent of the whole problem, it's Colombia and it is affecting their international partners. And they are also concerned.

So before we are done with this, it seems to me there will be a coming together of these democratic regimes to include us as one of them with the support, I hope, of the European Union, because we are absolutely going to work other partners to help with this process. The Brits have been extremely supportive. The Dutch have been supportive. The French. We have got to get concerned about it because it is going to have an impact on many of the rest of us.

Mr. SOUDER. I agree that analogies are dangerous. But if we were simultaneously right now funding Vietnam versus Colombia, we actually have to make some very tough budget decisions. We are looking at putting a minimum of \$4 billion to \$8 billion into the Balkans. I wanted to make an earlier comment which I understand is disputed. Mr. Beers and I have argued this before. But there is a disagreement in the INL. When I first offered an amendment to move Blackhawks to the CNP many years ago as to whether that money was coming from Bolivia and Peru or whether it was coming because, against the will arguably of INL and of the drug czar's office, resources were transferred to Bosnia at that time.

There were multiple waves in the accounting, whether it was a direct transfer or an indirect transfer. I in no way, nor did other people, think we were taking it in Bolivia and Peru. Now, we can dispute how the money gets moved around, but in fact it isn't as

simple as it looks just on the surface. Furthermore, I believe that history in fact does matter, not only because you don't want to repeat it, but because I know Mr. Reyes and others have expressed concerns about our politics. We are an oversight committee. We have to look through and say, well, we have done this. If this didn't happen, how could we not have that repeat again? That's what an oversight and reform committee does.

I hope in the record of this hearing we can go through and get some of the actual numbers because we have got numbers passing across each other here. I do want to clarify a couple of historical points which really are only minor, relative to the problem we are facing now in Colombia but important in trying to sort through how to get there. My understanding of the 7 Blackhawks with the Army and the 13 with the Air Force is those were not bought with our money. Those were bought by Colombians—

General MCCAFFREY. True.

Mr. SOUDER [continuing]. And the reason that they were bought by Colombians was because the Leahy rule says, in my opinion correctly, for a long period of time that the Colombian military was not screening their people enough; therefore, we could not provide aid to the Colombian military. The only way that we could provide aid was to the Colombian National Police because they had been vetted. Southcom and General Wilhelm and you and others have worked very hard to try to improve the Colombian military. They are trying to get the vetted units, but the only way that we could get additional Blackhawks with American funding into the developing crisis was to try to do it through the CNP, not that the Dante were sufficient to win a war. We understand that, but that was our only vehicle with which to do so. We are now, to add one other thing which I hope we will get into in these budget questions, the House passed the INL in general. We have increased it. We have had problems in the Senate. We have the work together—

General MCCAFFREY. Minus \$10 million.

Mr. SOUDER [continuing]. And then the sub-questions. The second point is that, as we all know but very few people want to admit, we are in the process of a very delicate dance about the budget caps. We are in the early stages of the budget agreement, not at the end stages. We know that we are facing omnibus or some sort of combination of omnibus and emergency supplemental. That's why you are hearing a lot of the questions here today. Will the administration come to the table with an emergency proposal that you are floating? You put everything in your office behind that because we are going to need additional money. The question is, is it going to go to INL or this kind of effort? Is this crisis going to be as forefront as the farm crisis, as the Y2K, as the many other things? That is partly, do the American people understand what we are facing here? And arguing over \$10 million when your budget initially was \$40 million I think and we came a little under that—not \$40 million for Colombia, but the INL was—now you are saying maybe \$600 million just for Colombia. Hey, conditions have changed. You said conditions have changed. So what are we going to do to push this up? History does matter some, but at this point how do we get to the next level?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, you can be assured, Mr. Congressman, I agree with your point. I will argue forcefully for a balanced coherent approach to this changing problem in the region. Mr. Pickering goes down there on Monday. I believe there is an enormous focus on the part of all of us that Colombia is going in the wrong direction and it's affecting our regional partners. I might add that we are concerned about Peru and Bolivia and Panama and many of the Caribbean Islands. So we will close on the issue. I will be prepared to discuss rationally our options inside the Government, and I will respond to the Congress in the fall.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman from Indiana, and I recognize Mr. Ose from California.

Mr. OSE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General, a couple of questions if I might. If I understand, within the budget that you have, you are able to move money back and forth between accounts?

General MCCAFFREY. I apologize. I missed that.

Mr. OSE. If I understand correctly within the budget that you have, you are able administratively to move money between accounts?

General MCCAFFREY. There is a legal authority for me to move a percent or so with the concurrence from the smaller of two budgets with the total concurrence of the committee in Congress from which the original budget came. So it's a tenuous authority that exists, and it has never been exercised.

Mr. OSE. One of the things that I find most troubling about this entire situation is that—and you are far more familiar with the numbers than I am and I suspect that if we get into an argument on the numbers I am going to look pretty foolish and you are going to look pretty smart. I am willing to go through that if I have to, but at some point I am reminded of that old ditty that mine is not to question why, mine is but to do or die.

I have to say, after 7 months up here, I don't care about the next election. I don't care whether I win or lose. I just want something to happen. We are tired of reading about the kids in the streets of America dying from this poison. I know that you are too. We moved a half million people and I don't know how much war materiel, to Saudi Arabia in 6 months' time, and we can't get 10 stinking helicopters to Colombia in 3 years? That's the level of my frustration. I am reminded of General McClelland when he worked for President Lincoln. He had all of the rationales for why he couldn't get out in the field and beat Robert E. Lee. Give me some guidance here.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I certainly agree with you on one thing, Mr. Congressman, we shouldn't argue about facts. Logic 101 in college, don't argue about facts. They either are or they aren't. We ought to argue about the implication of the facts. I think that I owe the chairman of the committee some layouts so that we can have a debate where we all agree on, here are the numbers, and get down to micro-detail on which two helicopters.

Make Mr. Beers and Sheridan answer those questions. I think there is no question of this at all. Four years ago, the counter-drug budget was \$13.5 billion. This year the request on the Hill is \$17.8 billion. That includes a 21 percent increase in support for the INL

process in that same period of time; 36 percent increase in research; 52 percent increase in prevention education; 26 percent increase in treatment. There are real people, real programs, real adds, and, oh, by the way, there is a real decrease in drug abuse among American adolescents.

So you ought to be frustrated, but don't you forget that Congress has provided some serious sensible increases to support this program. I am very well aware of it and supportive of it. When it comes to helicopters and trainers and equipment for the Colombian armed forces and police, we have had problems. There are real increases in their capabilities over the last 4 years. No question. I go down there and I get on Blackhawk helicopters and I visit the counter-narcotics battalion in Tolamia and the 7th special forces group is there, and we are doing the right thing.

Now, I think we do, back to your point, we need a new debate on it because coca protection has doubled. They are attacking the police and the army in the outskirts of Bogota. And the peace process is not working.

Mr. OSE. I don't care about the peace process in Colombia. I just don't care. I don't care. I just want to know when are we going to, as you have suggested, take a material hard look at whether we are succeeding or failing on our—on our standards? Just giving General Serrano a couple of helicopters that can get to the elevations that he needs to go to seems like an infinitesimally simple thing. I don't understand why we can't do it.

General MCCAFFREY. I think the answer is, we are doing it. That's the answer. There actually are six Blackhawk helicopters that will show up in Colombia. There actually are NAS-supported Hueys. There actually is a brand new intelligence coordination center that I was just in. There actually are huge resources flowing into Colombia and they are making a difference. Now, we need to revisit, is this adequate not only for Colombia, but for the region?

Mr. OSE. If it's not, the dilemma that we are going to be faced is with the FARC growing ever larger, and threatening the neighbors and a peace process in shambles or whatever. The democratic institutions in these countries will be collapsing. We are going to have a real hard choice. I would rather get those helicopters there now. If it's the helicopters, if it's the physical presence in the air of helicopters spraying coca plants that sends the message or establishes the fact that the FARC is not going to rule here, I just think that we ought to send—I have read General Frank's book.

I know you're experienced in the Second Corps. I know if there is anybody who can do this, you are the man. I don't understand why we can't get 10 stinking helicopters to Colombia. I am completely frustrated. We have kids dying in my district. I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman. I would like to recognize as we conclude for a couple of minutes Mr. Cummings is serving as our ranking member.

Mr. CUMMINGS. General, a few weeks ago one of my proudest moments in sitting on this subcommittee, and on this committee, came when we held a hearing with regard to a murderer from—I think it was Florida, Deltoro. This guy had eluded extradition to the United States. And they had been trying to get him extradited

from Mexico for something like 18 months, 2 years. And in one hearing, in a bipartisan way, this subcommittee got it done within about 2 weeks.

I think what you are hearing from Congressman Ose and really Congressman Souder and all of us is that, first of all, we acknowledge that you have probably the most difficult job in this country. I don't think that anybody here would question that. I think you are doing a great job. I think quietly others might say the same thing. But at the same time when Mr. Burton was questioning you, you said you agree with him and maybe we need to get together. It's not going to take that long, to get together to look at our policies with regard to Colombia. You also said that, and I agree with you, that we have to be careful about the Congress or the congressional staff micro-managing what goes on as far as these policies are concerned.

I just come to one basic question, and that is how do we help you accomplish what you have to accomplish? I, deep in my heart, I believe that we are pretty much on the same page. We may have different routes of getting there, but I mean, I can hear the frustration in my colleagues because I feel the same kind of frustration. I also feel the frustration from you. Since we are all trying to get to the same place—if you don't mind, can you just tell us—I think Mr. Reyes alluded to the same thing—it's not a beatup session, but how can we work together to take these dollars that our constituents are paying in taxes and use them effectively and cost efficiently. That's basically what I think would be helpful for us so that we can receive a clear message from you so that when we walk out of here we can say at least we know that the drug czar has come in, he has laid out his problems. I don't care what anybody says. It is much more complicated. You have made it clear that it's much more complicated than I thought it was. So now, how do we work with you to make this work?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, Mr. Congressman, first thing I think the hearing is enormously helpful. I think the process of bringing down the administration officials and asking us where we are and what our evolving thinking is is enormously useful. I think there is a follow-on step to this process, that clearly the situation changed. Colombia today isn't what it was 2 years ago. It's my own view it takes us about 3 years to see an idea and turn it into money and in appropriations.

If you want to build a Blackhawk helicopter and send it to Colombia, it is 25 months to build the thing, the best helicopter on the face of the Earth. So it takes time to work these ideas in a coherent fashion. I think we're doing that. If you start looking back at the resources we've put in the international piece of it, they've gone up substantially. It's hard to throw money at Colombia, for example, or even helicopters. You've got to find Colombian pilots to fly them. That's a year of training. And meanwhile, they're fighting for their lives. They're not going to be able to pull people offline. Very complex issue.

I think in the fall I should come back and tell you where we've taken our evolving thinking based on my visits to the region, also Mr. Pickering and others, and let's see where we ought to go from here.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I'm sure the chairman will take you up on that invitation and we look forward to continuing to work with you as we address these very, very serious problems. And I thank you for all that you do every day, every hour to uplift our country and the wonderful citizens of this great America.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman and recognize for very brief comments Mr. Souder.

Mr. SOUDER. I had a specific comment. I want to make two other brief ones as well. First, I don't know where we would be, General McCaffrey, if you weren't there, drug czar. So whatever criticisms I may have of this administration or times of you, I want to say that for the record. I said it before. But if you were to leave, it would be a tremendous devastation to our country. If you hadn't been there and using the moral authority and your ability to articulate, we'd be in a lot worse shape. I believe we need to move ahead and not look back but I just have to say this for the record.

Every time I hear you refer to the training time, I'm thinking that's why we were pushing this stuff 4 years ago. If we had been a little farther ahead of the curve, we wouldn't be potentially quite as bad. It would still be bad. I also want to say one other thing for the record. It's not meant as a criticism in any way. There were lots of conflict back and forth but as a former staffer myself, I want to say a brief word on behalf of staff. As I remember, when I was a Senate staffer, we always said the scariest thing is when somebody comes up and says my boss was talking to your boss in the elevator because the plain truth of the matter is that whether you're the head of GM, or the drug czar, or a Member of Congress, we have to raise money. We're going back and forth to vote on the floor. You hire people who become experts in that. The first time I went to Colombia, one of the people we took along with us as an expert was former Ambassador Buzby who had been Ambassador to Colombia, when what was referred to earlier as the courts problem there was there. He'd been over Latin America issues. We need that expertise. It does not mean there aren't going to be disagreements. It means ultimately we're elected by the people and we have to make those final decisions in this area.

I've been to Colombia four times. Mr. Mica has been there many times. Mr. Barr spent much of his youth there in addition to his trips back. So we are trying to stay engaged but we also have to have experts on our staff. I wanted to make sure the record reflected that. That's the only point I wanted to make.

General MCCAFFREY. If I may, because I share your viewpoint, there are enormously bright, skilled, experienced people on the congressional staffs. I have about 10 people working for me who are the most knowledgeable folks I ever ran into in the government on the Andean Ridge problems, but you can't design the Colombian police and Air Force in Washington with anybody's bureaucracy. It's got to be the Colombian authorities, their strategy. They've got to budget for it. They've—they can't just buy Blackhawks. They've got to get the training package, the maintenance package, et cetera. They have to see the tradeoffs. That's why I've argued push it out, let our Ambassador, our CINC and Colombian authorities sort out rational policies and then we'll decide whether or not to support them.

Mr. SOUDER. I understand your principle, but remember in the constitutional powers as the United States was developed, we seek the advice of the administration for how to fund things, but it is the responsibility of Congress ultimately to make the funding decisions. We are saying because of your expertise, the way the system has evolved as we've gone much more to the executive branch to create offices like drug czar because we seek that, but ultimately we in fact do have to make the funding decisions as American dollars go to Colombia or wherever and we should be careful not to overmicromanage. When we feel the advisory and execution branch is not following that policy it is our constitutional responsibility to do the very thing which is if necessary to micromanage.

General MCCAFFREY. Sure. I understand.

Mr. MICA. Thank you, Mr. Souder. Being chairman, there is one benefit and I get to say the last word, General. We thank you for your testimony today and look forward to cooperating and working with you.

Just a couple of things for the record. I had staff check on the number of flights from Howard Air Force Base and we sent down the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics staff, Senate Foreign Relations staff, House International Relations Committee, our subcommittee, other staff. This is the latest report I have, July 1999. American facilities, page 6, within the former Panama Canal Zone, have provided vital counternarcotics activities. Air operations from the base ceased on May 1, 1999. Before that time the 8,500 foot runways saw 15,000 flights annually. The base could handle up to 30 helicopters and over 50 planes. Now, I'm sure that they had various missions but given 2,000 flights only would have left 40 something planes on the ground each day. I don't think that was the case. And this may be incorrect. It's just the information that was given to our staff.

General MCCAFFREY. It's a small effort, to be honest.

Mr. MICA. Just for the record, without objection, we'll include that.

Additionally, you testified that we have had successes in Peru and Bolivia, some of them initiated by the former chair of Drug Policy and who is now Speaker of the House. I think if we check the record, we'll find that we actually spent very few dollars there and have had extremely good return. Peru had a very difficult situation with its insurgency problem so it's not dissimilar. It's not totally similar in any way but they have been able to do it, and if we checked, it would be with very few dollars from us.

And also let the record reflect that the administration did transfer \$45 million from that region, the South American region. I remember going down there with Mr. Hastert. We were looking for the money and they had transferred it to Haiti. And you testified today, General, that some assets had been—had been transferred or used in Kosovo and that was an emergency situation. You have also identified an emergency situation here. And then finally an interesting note, we had done some surveillance with you, too. We found out when we were down there we were doing that until the vice president sent the U-2's that were doing drug missions to Alaska to check for oil spills. So we do need to check what our priorities are and try to get them in order and look forward to work-

ing with you in a mutual effort to bring this situation under control.

We thank you for coming. We look forward to working with you and I'll excuse you at this time.

General McCaffrey. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. I call our third panel. I am going to call forward the Honorable Randy Beers, Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the Department of State; the Honorable Brian E. Sheridan, Assistant Secretary of Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict with the Department of Defense; Mr. William E. Ledwith, Chief of the International Operations of Drug Enforcement Agency; and I'd also ask if we could have Mr. Michael Shifter join us on this panel. He's the senior fellow and program director of the Inter-American Dialogue.

I'd like to welcome this panel of witnesses and again this is an investigations and oversight subcommittee of Congress. We do swear in our witnesses. Some of you have been before us and some of you haven't. If you would please stand.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. MICA. The witnesses answered in the affirmative. I'm pleased to welcome our panelists. We have gone for some time, and I am going to enforce the 5-minute rule. We'll put on the timer. If you have lengthy statements, we can make them part of the record just upon request or additional information or data that you think will be of particular importance to the record of this hearing.

So with that, I'd like to welcome back and recognize the still standing or sitting Randy Beers, our Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs for the Department of State. You're recognized.

STATEMENTS OF RANDY BEERS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE; BRIAN E. SHERIDAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE; WILLIAM E. LEDWITH, CHIEF OF INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS, DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION; AND MICHAEL SHIFTER, SENIOR FELLOW, INTER-AMERICAN DIALOGUE

Mr. BEERS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I will make a very brief statement in opening. Thank you very much for this opportunity. You have, as is quite often this committee's role, brought us together on an absolutely critical issue that we are facing at this time and we all appreciate that. I echo General McCaffrey's statement in that regard.

Let me say also that General McCaffrey, I think, has done a fairly respectable job in his opening statement of covering most of the material that I will want to cover and I wish only to say that the State Department, and INL in particular, are committed to dealing with the problem in Colombia, to going after drug traffickers in both the areas of cocaine and heroin. And I look forward to your questions and an opportunity to explain some of the questions which you all have raised in your own opening statements.

Thank you.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Beers, that's probably the shortest statement made by any official of the State Department in history. We welcome it in a way, but we'll be back for questions after we hear from Brian E. Sheridan, Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict with our Department of Defense. You're welcome and recognized, sir.

Mr. SHERIDAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm also very pleased to be here today to discuss the situation in Colombia. I think we all share the committee's concern about recent events there.

In your letter inviting me to come today, you asked four questions. I would like to very briefly address those. In a written form submitted to the committee are fuller responses, but I would like to highlight a couple of key points.

You asked about the nature of the drug threat in Colombia. To us we still see Colombia as a source of over 80 percent of cocaine hydrochloride production. We see recently increased fragmentation in the business and explosion in cultivation, a continued heavy reliance on aircraft for internal flights by drug traffickers within Colombia and what in our view is an increased kind of intermingling or blurring between the FARC and drug traffickers.

Second, you asked what are recent initiatives of the Government of Colombia to address this threat. I can only speak to the ones that the Department of Defense are involved in, and as for recent initiatives, we're working with them on the counternarcotics battalion, enhancing their air programs and enhancing their riverine programs.

And then last you asked about the regional security implications and for that I would simply say they are serious today and potentially more serious as time goes on.

If I could close, I would like to make one pitch to the committee for support going forward on keeping open the School of the Americas. Congressman Reyes raised that a few moments ago and I think General McCaffrey spoke of the importance of the school. I think at a time when we're studying the situation in Colombia and are concerned about it, it's worth noting that over the last 5 years, 789 Colombian police and military have attended the School of the Americas and from a regional perspective, 310 Bolivians, 116 Ecuadorians, 22 Peruvians, and 177 Venezuelans, so from a Department of Defense perspective, the School of the Americas plays a vital role in our engagement in the region and in running good sound counternarcotics programs.

With that, I will conclude my statement and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sheridan follows:]

**HONORABLE BRIAN E. SHERIDAN
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COORDINATOR FOR
DRUG ENFORCEMENT POLICY AND SUPPORT
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY,
AND HUMAN RESOURCES
6 AUGUST 1999**

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

Mr. Chairman, as always it is an honor to appear before this committee to discuss the Department of Defense's role in United States counterdrug activities as well as how these activities support our national security interests. I particularly welcome the opportunity to address these issues in conjunction with our interagency partners from the State Department and the Drug Enforcement Agency. I also want to thank the members of the subcommittee for their support and interest in the Department's counterdrug program as well as the guidance and leadership of your committee. Congressional support is critical to ensuring progress is made in our struggle against illicit narcotics, especially cocaine. Colombia continues to be the world's leading producer and distributor of cocaine, and over the past two years has seen an explosive growth in cultivation. The importance of the connection between Colombia, cocaine, and the U.S. drug problem cannot be dismissed easily from our minds. The sad fact is that Americans spend thirty-eight billion dollars each year on cocaine. Yet, the threat posed by narco-traffickers in Colombia extends not only to American lives but also to the national security of this nation. This body recognized this threat when it passed legislation in 1989 directing the Department of Defense to aid in the war against drugs. In this light, the Department has actively pursued a strategy that not only addresses the on-going drug threat, but in fact has taken steps to address the changing drug trafficking patterns.

Evolution of the Threat

The drug trafficking threat from Colombia has changed significantly from the early 1990s to today. In the early 1990s, Colombian labs processed most of the world's cocaine HCL. Peru on the other hand was the major coca cultivator. For example, in 1993, Peru produced approximately 450 metric tons, that was more than sixty percent of the world's coca. The coca base was moved from Peru to Colombia for processing by approximately 1,000 aircraft flights per year. Since aircraft are the most efficient way to move tons of HCL, the traffickers would then fly the cocaine from southeastern Colombia to Colombia's north and west coasts for transshipment to the U.S.

Today the picture is different. Colombian labs continue to process most of the world's cocaine HCL and the airbridge from the interior of the country to the northern and western coasts is still in use. However, thanks to Peru's aggressive air-interdiction operations, combined with an efficient coca eradication program, coca cultivation in Peru has declined by fifty-six percent since 1995.

On the other hand, Colombian coca growth is surging. It is estimated that more than 200 metric tons will be produced in Colombia this year, doubling over the past few years. This recent explosion in coca production in Colombia can be attributed to the successful air-bridge interdiction efforts in Peru, which hampered the trafficker's ability to move large quantities of coca base into Colombia. Consequently, Colombian cocaine producers spurred farmers to develop new fields, primarily in the southwestern region of Putumayo, and plant higher yield coca crops. Despite an aggressive U.S. / Colombia aerial coca eradication program, coca cultivation continues to increase.

Colombia

The improved cooperation between the U.S. Government and the Government of Colombia at the executive level has also been mirrored at other government levels. The best example of this improved cooperation is the greater emphasis by Colombia's armed forces on combating narcotics trafficking while preventing human rights abuses, and an increasing exchange of ideas, expertise and support between the U.S. and Colombian armed forces. Colombia is now the third largest recipient of U.S. security assistance. In 1998, Deputy Secretary Hamre and then-Colombian Minister of Defense Rodrigo Lloreda agreed to form a Bilateral Working Group to broaden and deepen our military to military relationships. This has contributed to a more synergistic and productive relationship, which maintains full respect for Colombian sovereignty, and continues to evolve within the context of U.S. policy.

DoD's Role in Counterdrug Activities in Colombia

For six years, counterdrug operations in the cocaine producing regions in South America have served as the focus of this administration supply reduction programs. The dramatic success of the Peru air interdiction program serves as an example of the merit of this approach. Consistent with this source zone focus, the Department Defense developed a Colombian strategy designed to attack the Colombian portion of the cocaine threat. The Department's integrated Colombian strategy consists of four strategic efforts. These efforts form a responsive, flexible and integrated interagency campaign that engages the narco-trafficker across the whole spectrum of the illegal narcotics trade. Let me discuss the Department's integrated Colombian strategy.

Air

The Department's air interdiction effort recognizes that the movement of cocaine within Colombia is highly dependent upon air transportation, primarily via non-commercial flights. Consequently, the interagency is focusing on means to increase the risk to traffickers who utilize this means of transportation to move their illegal drugs from the production regions in the south and east to debarkation points along the Caribbean and Pacific coasts. While there are several elements to developing a productive counterdrug aerial interdiction program, the modernization of the Colombian Air Forces' A-37 aircraft is key. The Department of Defense, along with the State Department, has embarked on a multi-year initiative to up-grade these Colombian aircraft which will enhance their air intercept capability and improve overall readiness. In FY99, the Department will spend slightly over five million dollars upgrading Colombian aerial platforms used for interdiction and an additional two million dollars on A-37 training for Colombian pilots.

Riverine

The second strategic effort, riverine interdiction, resulted from the congressionally authorized program to acquire equipment needed to develop and support counterdrug riverine operations in Colombia, with a parallel initiative in Peru. This counterdrug program became necessary as the drug traffickers reacted to successful Peruvian air interdiction efforts by shifting to smuggling routes that utilized the vast Amazon River network. Colombia currently fields 18 counterdrug Riverine Combat Elements (RCEs) made up of four boats each. The eventual goal is to deploy a total of 45 RCEs. In FY99, the Department will spend almost five million dollars

on boats and equipment for the counterdrug riverine program and an additional two and one-half million dollars for riverine infrastructure development.

Ground

U.S. Southern Command's support of the formation of the Colombian counterdrug battalion constitutes the Department's critical element in the ground interdiction effort. U.S. Southern Command is currently training and providing non-lethal equipment for the battalion, which will be stationed at Tres Esquinas. The training of professional Colombian soldiers began in April 1999 and field exercises are scheduled to be completed in December of this year. All of the select soldiers in the counterdrug battalion have been screened for human rights compliance, in accordance with section 8130 of the Department of Defense Appropriation Act for FY99. This battalion will participate in joint military/CNP counterdrug interdiction and endgame operations in the drug producing regions of Colombia. Approximately seven million dollars will be expended in FY99 and FY00 in support of the counterdrug battalion.

To further enhance counterdrug interdiction operations, the Department is supporting an interagency effort to establish a Colombian Joint Intelligence Center (JIC) which will be collocated with the counterdrug battalion at Tres Esquinas. This center is ideally located in close proximity to one of the major coca growing regions in southern Colombia. The Colombian JIC personnel will be trained and all of the selected soldiers will be screened for human rights compliance, in accordance with section 8130 of the Department of Defense Appropriation Act for FY99. Information disseminated from the JIC will focus joint interdiction operations executed by the CNP and supporting elements of the Colombian military.

Maritime

The fourth strategic effort, maritime interdiction, is designed to increase support to the Colombian maritime forces that combat traffickers who move their drugs via boats and fishing vessels through the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific transit zones. U.S. Navy ships and aircraft, in conjunction with U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Customs Service, and other nation's assets, patrol the region, passing valuable information to Colombian end-game forces positioned along the coast. These efforts are coordinated through the Joint Interagency Task Force in Key West, Florida.

Regional Systems and Programs

These four strategic efforts are girded by numerous Department systems and programs that provide cueing information for follow-on ground, aerial and maritime interdiction efforts in Colombia and throughout the source nation region. Critical counterdrug systems include ground based radar systems; Re-locatable Over The Horizon Radar (ROTHR) systems; P-3 Maritime Patrol Aircraft, including the Counter Drug Unit (CDU) variant; and airborne early warning aircraft such as AWACS and the E-2 that support the interagency's air interdiction effort, fulfilling the Department's Detection and Monitoring (D&M) mission. The U.S. Army's Airborne Reconnaissance Low (ARL) aircraft and Tactical Analysis Teams programs play pivotal roles in the effort to collect, analyze, and distribute critical intelligence information to Colombian National Police (CNP) and military units engaged in counterdrug operations in the field. These supporting systems and related programs are part of a total Department source nation effort of approximately two-hundred and forty seven million dollars in FY99, much of which will be directed towards the Colombian drug threat.

The recent crash of the ARL aircraft on July 23, 1999, and the tragic loss of its seven member multi-national crew, highlights the inherent danger posed in the conduct of counterdrug operations and is indicative of the risk that our military personnel take in an effort to enhance Colombia's counterdrug capability. We must continue to ensure that our interagency personnel who willingly take such risk are provided the best equipment and our undivided support.

The final element that is instrumental to the success of the Department's overall assistance program is the full establishment of the planned Forward Operating Locations (FOL). These FOLs support counterdrug operations that had previously staged out of Howard Air Force Base in Panama. The importance of the Department's counterdrug support operations and the need for a forward-staged U.S. presence to sustain them led Southern Command to develop the current FOL concept. The FOL concept seeks to take advantage of existing airport facilities owned and operated by host nations that are made available under bilateral agreements. Indeed, the concept has already proven its value as U.S. aircraft have continued their detection and monitoring missions on an interim basis from the newly established FOLs in the Curacao/Aruba and from Ecuador. The value of U.S. military presence options afforded by FOLs for this mission, specifically the additional location at Manta, Ecuador which is geographically ideal to support D&M missions in southern Colombia, cannot be overstated. We need your support to develop these FOLs fully in order to execute the Department's congressionally directed D&M mission in the Southern Hemisphere. As an aside, Customs P-3 aircraft operating out of Manta on counterdrug missions initially participated in the search for the downed counterdrug ARL aircraft that crashed in Colombia on July 23, 1999.

DoD's Role in non-Operational Activities in Colombia

The first U.S.-Colombia Defense Bilateral Working Group (BWG) took place in March of this year in Bogota, Colombia. This BWG proved to be an important milestone in our bilateral relationship, offering participants a clear break with the Samper years, and clearing the way for specific progress on human rights, military justice reform, and military institutional reform as well as counternarcotics issues. The Colombians were pleased with their interaction with the broad range of Department representatives at the BWG. Both the General Policy and Modernization/Proliferation sub-working groups addressed such areas as military justice reform and disaster relief, on which we will work cooperatively over the next few months. The Counternarcotics Working Group also identified several areas for further exploration. Finally, the Defense Ministry, recognizing that its military may not be optimally structured to address the current threat, is studying far-reaching reforms that would streamline the military command structure and improve inter-service coordination.

With respect to human rights, there have been measurable Colombian improvements across the board. According to the State Department's Human Rights Reports for the last several years, military involvement in human rights violations has dropped dramatically, from half the total in 1993 to less than three percent last year. The Colombian Army has begun to take steps to discipline officers accused of links to the paramilitary groups. These paramilitary groups are credited with the largest percentage of human rights violations in Colombia. The Colombian Congress has also passed a military justice reform bill. This new law will require military personnel accused of human rights violations to stand trial in civilian courts, and it is expected to be signed into law by President Pastrana shortly.

Conclusion

We face a difficult challenge in Colombia. As in the past, the Department will continue to focus on supporting a coordinated interdiction capability that holds the narco-trafficker at risk throughout the entire drug cultivation, production and transportation process. The establishment of the Colombian Joint Intelligence Center and the fielding of the Counterdrug battalion will allow engagement of the critical Putumayo coca growing area and cocaine producing laboratories. The riverine program will furnish Colombia with the capability to engage river smuggling activity effectively. Further, U.S. programs are in place for effective air interdiction. Support of north coast maritime operations will ensure that go-fast boats used for drug smuggling are impeded in their routes. Lastly, the newly formed military bilateral-exchange provides a mechanism for potent U.S.-Colombian cooperation and program development. Even with these initiatives, there is, however, no near-term solution. Success will be achieved as a result of the coordinated, flexible and sustained strategic efforts directed against all facets of the drug trade in Colombia -- cultivation, production, and transit. With congressional support, I am confident that the Department will continue to play an appropriate supporting role in the U.S. counterdrug effort in Colombia.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. And we'd like to now recognize Mr. William E. Ledwith, who is the Chief of International Operations with the DEA. Welcome. You're recognized, sir.

Mr. LEDWITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, for providing DEA the opportunity to testify at this very important hearing. If I may, we have a short oral statement and then I would request that our full written statement be submitted for the record.

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

Mr. LEDWITH. Chairman Mica and members of the committee, DEA believes that the international trafficking organizations based in Colombia who smuggle their drugs into our country are indeed a threat to the national security of the United States. As a law enforcement agency, DEA must hold to a high standard of evidence our investigations aimed to gather evidence sufficient to indict, arrest, and convict criminals. Our evidence must be usable in a court of law and must withstand severe scrutiny at every level of the criminal justice process. With that in mind, my testimony will be limited to presenting the evidence that DEA holds and drawing conclusions which we can support given the legal standards we must meet.

Colombian traffickers control the vast majority of cocaine in South America and their fingerprints are on virtually every kilogram of cocaine sold in United States cities and towns. In addition, Colombia alone now manufactures a minimum of 165 metric tons of cocaine hydrochloride directly from Colombian grown coca leaf, with an almost equal amount being manufactured or controlled by Colombians from Peruvian and Bolivian cocaine base. Colombian traffickers are becoming increasingly less reliant on Peruvian and Bolivian cocaine base.

As many of you are aware and as DEA has testified to in the past, the United States is currently experiencing a significant cocaine and heroin trade on the East Coast of the United States franchising a significant portion of their wholesale and cocaine operations is allowing the top level Colombians to remain beyond the reach of American justice. The Dominicans in the United States now, not the Colombians are the ones subject to arrest while the top level Colombians control the organizations from outside the United States.

This change in operations succeeds in reducing the Colombian criminals' exposure to United States law enforcement and extradition to the United States. Reducing their exposure puts the Colombian bosses closer to their goal of operating from a political, legal, and electronic sanctuary.

In addition to the Colombian organized crime groups involved in the international drug trade, there is another issue of great importance to both the United States and to Colombia. There is deep concern about the connection between the FARC and other terrorist groups and right wing groups in Colombia and the drug trade. The Colombian Government is responding to this armed challenge.

DEA has in the past demonstrated its ability and willingness to fight drug trafficking organizations on a global basis. For example, we participated in the struggle against Pablo Escobar in Colombia,

a trafficker who resorted to extreme acts of violence as the net was closing around him. We will work to indict and bring to justice any drug trafficker regardless of his or her associations.

An alliance of convenience between guerrillas and traffickers is nothing new. Since the 1970's drug traffickers based in Colombia have made temporary alliances of convenience with guerrillas and right wing groups to secure protection for their drug interests. DEA intelligence indicates that many elements of the FARC and the ELN raise funds through extortion, taxation, or by directly selling security services to traffickers. These terrorists extort from all manner of economic activity in the areas in which they operate.

In return, the terrorists protect cocaine laboratories, drug crops, clandestine air strips and other drug interests.

However, these terrorists are not the glue that holds the drug trade together. If the traffickers did not buy security from the FARC or ELN, they would certainly buy it from elsewhere as they have done in the past. It is however true that the cash cow represented by the drug trade has taken on a major role in financing the terrorists.

The physical threat posed by the terrorists is very real. The frequent ground fire sustained by CNP aircraft when engaged in eradication missions over FARC or ELN controlled areas is indicative of the extent to which the terrorists will go to protect the drug interests.

DEA's partner in Colombia, the Colombian National Police, is a major law enforcement organization with a long and honored tradition of professionalism and sacrifice. CNP is aggressively pursuing significant counterdrug operations against cocaine processing laboratories, transportation networks, and trafficker command and control elements.

By way of conclusion, we can and should continue to identify and build cases against the leaders of the criminal groups from Colombia. A number of initiatives hold particular promise for success. DEA is fully committed to supporting efforts currently under way to train and equip effective forces within the Colombian military to counter the narco terrorist threat.

The excellent working relationships DEA enjoys with the Departments of State and Defense on counterdrug issues will provide a foundation for sustained cooperative effort in these undertakings. The United States Embassy's Information Analysis and Operation Center will be increasingly utilized to coordinate and analyze tactical information regarding the transportation and production activities of drug trafficking groups active in the Colombian territories south and east of the Andes Mountains. Special Investigative Unit programs funded under the Andean Ridge Initiative will continue to work closely with DEA and conduct high level drug investigations against the most significant violators.

The CNP, in concert with DEA and other law enforcement agencies, is conducting several sophisticated investigations which we believe will lead to the dismantling of major portions of the most significant drug trafficking organizations currently operating in Colombia. The DEA will continue to work with our partners in Colombia to improve our cooperative efforts against all those involved in drug trafficking.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the subcommittee today. I will be happy to respond to any questions you may have, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ledwith follows:]

Remarks by

William Ledwith

Chief of International Operations
Drug Enforcement Administration
United States Department of Justice

before the

**House Government Reform Committee,
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and
Human Resources**

regarding

Colombia



Room 2154
Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.
August 6, 1999

NOTE: This is the prepared text and may not reflect changes in actual delivery

**Statement of
William Ledwith
Chief of International Operations,
Drug Enforcement Administration
before The House Government Reform Committee,
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy,
and Human Resources
August 6, 1999**

Chairman Mica and members of the Committee. It is a pleasure for me to appear here today to testify on counterdrug issues in Colombia. We believe that the international drug trafficking organizations based in Colombia who smuggle their poison into our country are, indeed, a threat to the national security of the United States.

As a law enforcement agency, DEA holds itself to a high standard of evidence. Our investigations aim to gather evidence sufficient to indict, arrest, and convict criminals. When DEA operates in foreign posts, we work within the legal systems of our host nations, and of course within the strictures of the U.S. legal system, and in cooperation with our host nation police agency counterparts. Our evidence must be usable in a court of law, and must withstand severe scrutiny at every level of the criminal justice process. With that in mind, my testimony will be limited to presenting DEA's view of the drug threat in Colombia today and a brief statement of how we work to counter that threat.

I. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

DEA's mission is to target the powerful international drug syndicates which operate around the world, supplying drugs to American communities, employing thousands of individuals to transport and distribute drugs. The most significant international drug syndicates operating today are far more powerful and violent than any organized criminal groups that we have experienced in American law enforcement. Today's major international organized crime drug syndicates are simply the 1990's versions of traditional organized crime mobsters U.S. law enforcement officials have fought since the beginning of this century.

Members of international groups headquartered in Colombia and Mexico today have at their disposal sophisticated technology -- encrypted phones, faxes, and other communications equipment. Additionally, they have in their arsenal aircraft, radar-equipped aircraft, weapons and an army of workers who oversee the drug business from its raw beginnings in South American jungles to the urban areas within the United States. All of this modern technology and these vast resources enable the leaders of international criminal groups to build organizations which reach into the heartland of America, while they themselves try to remain beyond the reach

of American justice. The traffickers also have the financial resources necessary to corrupt enough law enforcement, military, and political officials to create a relatively safe haven for themselves in the countries in which they make their headquarters.

These international drug traffickers use sophisticated, high tech equipment and are proficient in the use of cell phones, pagers, faxes and other conveniences. The cell structure of the organizations necessitates a complex system of communications to enable the organization's leaders to know where every kilo of cocaine is located, how much profit is being made, and where and when deliveries will take place. By using cell phones and pagers, the leaders communicate with different segments of the organization, and provide only pieces of information to each segment, thereby reducing the vulnerability of individuals and the entire organization.

As complex as these communications arrangements of organized crime groups are, U.S. law enforcement agencies have been able to exploit their communications by using court-approved telephone interceptions. With the top leadership of these organizations in hiding beyond the immediate reach of U.S. law enforcement, we have directed our resources at their organizational structure, and their transportation and distribution elements in the United States.

We have been able to identify, indict, and in many cases arrest, international drug traffickers because the very feature of their operations which makes them most formidable -- the ability to exercise effective command and control over a far flung criminal enterprise -- is the feature that law enforcement can use against them, turning their strength into a weakness. However, it must be noted that the spread of non-recoverable encryption technology threatens to remove this essential investigative tool from our arsenal, and poses, in our view, a threat to the national security of the United States because it will hamper law enforcement efforts to protect our citizens from drug trafficking organizations operating abroad.

II. EVOLUTION OF ORGANIZED CRIME IN COLOMBIA

The international drug syndicates who control drug trafficking today from the source zone, through the transit zones in the Caribbean and through Mexico, and into the United States, are interconnected. We cannot discuss the trafficking situation today without looking at the evolution of the groups from Colombia --- how they began, what their status is today, and how the groups from Mexico have learned important lessons from them, thereby becoming major trafficking organizations in their own right.

Throughout the 1980's and into the early 1990's, the Medellin Cartel dominated the international cocaine trade. In the late 1980's, the Ochoa brothers (Juan David, Jorge Luis, and Fabio) ran the most powerful of the Medellin Cartel drug trafficking organizations. Taking advantage of Colombia's lenient sentencing provisions, the Ochoa brothers voluntarily surrendered to the Colombian Government in late 1990 and early 1991. Following their surrender and the violent deaths of Jose Rodriguez Gacha (December 1989) and Pablo Escobar

(December 1993), the Medellin Cartel fragmented and gradually lost its secure lock on the international cocaine market.

In the early 1990s, as their predecessors from the Medellin cartel surrendered to avoid extradition, the loose association of five independent drug trafficking groups collectively known as the Cali Cartel dominated the international cocaine market. Where the Medellin cartel was brash and publicly violent in their activities, the criminals who ran their organization from Cali, labored behind the pretense of legitimacy, by posing as businessmen carrying out their professional obligations. The Cali leaders --- the Rodriguez Orejuela brothers, Jose Santacruz Londono, Helmer "Pacho" Herrera Buitrago--- amassed fortunes and ran their multi-billion dollar cocaine businesses from high-rises and ranches in Colombia. Miguel Rodriguez Orejuela and his associates comprised what was, until then, the most powerful international organized crime group in history. They employed a wide range of aircraft, including Boeing 727s, to ferry drugs to Mexico, from there the drugs were smuggled into the United States, and then the money from U.S. drug sales was returned to Colombia with. Using landing areas in Mexico, they were able to evade U.S. law enforcement officials and make important alliances with transportation and distribution experts in Mexico.

With intense law enforcement pressure focused on the Cali leadership by the brave men and women in the Colombian National Police during 1995 and 1996, all of the top leadership of the Cali syndicate ended up either in jail, or dead. The capture of the Rodriguez Orejuela brothers in 1995, the death of Jose Santacruz Londono in March 1996, and the surrender of Helmer Herrera in September 1996--have accelerated the decentralization of the drug trade. Since the Cali leaders' imprisonments (on sentences that in no way matched the severity of their crimes) traffickers from Mexico took on greater prominence. The alliance between the Colombian traffickers and the organizations from Mexico benefitted both sides. Traditionally, the traffickers from Mexico have long been involved in smuggling marijuana, heroin, and cocaine into the United States, and had established solid distribution routes throughout the nation. Because the Cali syndicate was concerned about the security of their loads, they brokered a commercial deal with the traffickers from Mexico in order to reduce their potential losses.

This agreement entailed the Colombians' moving cocaine from the Andean region to the Mexican organizations, who then assumed the responsibility of delivering the cocaine to the United States. As the arrangement evolved, trafficking groups from Mexico now are routinely paid for their services in multi-ton quantities of cocaine, making them formidable cocaine traffickers in their own right.

Drugs at The Source

The international drug syndicates discussed above control both the sources and the flow of drugs into the United States. The vast majority of the cocaine entering the United States continues to come from the source countries of Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru. Virtually all of the estimated six metric tons of heroin produced in Colombia in 1998 is destined for the U.S. market.

For nearly two decades, crime groups from Colombia have ruled the drug trade with an iron fist, increasing their profit margin by controlling the entire continuum of the cocaine market. Their control ranged from the coca leaf production in Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia, to the cocaine hydrochloride (HCl) production and processing centers in Colombia, to the wholesale distribution of cocaine on the streets of the United States.

Colombian traffickers continue to import cocaine base from the jungles of Bolivia and Peru, but in ever decreasing amounts. Coca leaf production continues to grow within Colombia itself. The traffickers move the cocaine to the large cocaine HCl conversion laboratories in southern Colombia. The vast majority of the cocaine base and cocaine HCl destined for the United States is produced in these laboratories throughout Colombia. Many of these activities take place in the southern rain forests and eastern lowlands of Colombia. Most of the coca cultivation in Colombia occurs in the Departments of Guaviare, Caqueta, and Putumayo. This cultivation occurs in areas that are effectively under control of insurgent groups. Cocaine conversion laboratories range from smaller "family" operations to much larger facilities, employing dozens of workers. Once the cocaine HCl is manufactured, it is either shipped via maritime vessels or aircraft to traffickers in Mexico, or shipped through the Caribbean corridor, including the Bahamas Island chain, to U.S. entry points in Puerto Rico, Miami, and New York.

Drugs in Transit

Over half of the cocaine entering the United States continues to come from Colombia through Mexico and across U.S. border points of entry. Most of this cocaine enters the United States in privately-owned vehicles and commercial trucks. There is new evidence that indicates a few traffickers in Mexico have gone directly to sources of cocaine in Bolivia and Peru in order to circumvent Colombian middlemen. In addition to the supply of cocaine entering the U.S., trafficking organizations from Mexico are responsible for producing and trafficking thousands of pounds of methamphetamine.

Drug trafficking in the Caribbean is overwhelmingly influenced by Colombian organized criminal groups. The Caribbean had long been a favorite smuggling route used by the Cali and Medellin crime groups to smuggle cocaine to the United States. During the late 1970's and the 1980's, drug lords from Medellin and Cali, Colombia established a labyrinth of smuggling routes throughout the central Caribbean, including Haiti, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamian Island chain to South Florida, using a variety of smuggling techniques to transfer their cocaine to U.S. markets. Smuggling scenarios included airdrops of 500-700 kilograms in the Bahamian Island chain and off the coast of Puerto Rico, mid-ocean boat-to-boat transfers of 500 to 2,000 kilograms, and the commercial shipment of multi-tons of cocaine through the port of Miami.

After Miguel Rodríguez Orejuela and his confederates in the Cali crime syndicate were brought to justice by Colombian authorities in 1995, new groups from the North Valle del Cauca began vying for control of the lucrative markets on the United States East Coast, previously dominated by Rodríguez Orejuela. Experienced traffickers who have been active for years--but

worked in the shadow of the Cali drug lords-- have more recently proven adept at seizing opportunities to increase their role in the drug trade. Many of these organizations began to re-activate traditional trafficking routes in the Caribbean to move their product to market.

DEA's focus on the Cali organization's command and control functions in the U.S. enabled us to build formidable cases against the Cali leaders, which allowed our Colombian counterparts to accomplish the almost unimaginable-- the arrest and incarceration of the entire infrastructure of the most powerful crime group in history. Although Miguel Rodriguez Orejuela and his confederates continue to direct a portion of their operations from prison they are no longer able to maintain control over this once monolithic giant. Now, independent groups of traffickers from the Northern Valle del Cauca have replaced the highly structured, centrally controlled business operations of the Cali group. These new groups tend to be smaller and less monolithic, however, they continue to rely on fear and violence to expand and control their trafficking empires.

III. ORGANIZED CRIME SYSTEMS BASED IN COLOMBIA

Despite the rise to power by the Mexican crime syndicates and their increasing control of the wholesale cocaine trade in the United States, Colombian traffickers still control the manufacture of the vast majority of cocaine in South America and their fingerprints are on virtually every kilogram of cocaine sold in U.S. cities and towns.

DEA has identified major organizations based on the northern coast of Colombia that have deployed command and control cells in the Caribbean Basin to funnel tons of cocaine to the United States each year. Colombian managers, who have been dispatched to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, operate these command and control centers and are responsible for overseeing drug trafficking in the region. These groups are also directing networks of transporters that oversee the importation, storage, exportation, and wholesale distribution of cocaine destined for the continental United States.

Colombian trafficking organizations have potentially produced an estimated 165 metric tons of cocaine HCl, some 6 metric tons of heroin, and over 4,000 metric tons of marijuana in 1998. The bulk of these illicit drugs is destined for the United States. Colombian traffickers continue to control the supply of cocaine at its source and dominate the wholesale cocaine market in the eastern U.S. and Europe.

As indicated above, traffickers from 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 groups. This change in the manner in which business is conducted is also driven by the new trafficking groups in Colombia, who have chosen to return to the Caribbean to move their cocaine to the United States.

Mexican organized crime syndicates now control the distribution of cocaine in the western half and the Midwest of the United States. Moreover, the Colombians have franchised to criminals from the Dominican Republic a substantial portion of the mid-level wholesale cocaine and heroin trade on the East Coast of the U.S. The Colombian groups remain, however, in control of the sources of supply. The Dominican trafficking groups, already firmly entrenched as low-level cocaine and heroin wholesalers in the larger Northeastern cities, were uniquely placed to assume a far more significant role in this multi-billion-dollar business.

The Dominicans in the U.S., and not the Colombians, are the ones subject to arrest, while the top level Colombians control the organization with increasingly encrypted telephone calls. This change in operations reduces profits somewhat for the syndicate leaders. It succeeds, however, also in reducing their exposure to U.S. law enforcement. When arrested, the Dominicans will have little damaging information that can be used against their Colombian masters. Reducing their exposure, together with encrypted communications, puts the Colombian bosses closer to their goal of operating from a political, legal, and electronic sanctuary.

IV. COLOMBIAN CRIME GROUPS IN THE U.S.

Colombian cocaine trafficking groups in the U.S. -- consisting of mid-level traffickers answering to the bosses in Colombia -- continue to be organized around "cells" that operate within a given geographic area. Some cells specialize in a particular facet of the drug trade, such as cocaine transport, storage, wholesale distribution, or money laundering. Each cell, which may be comprised of 10 or more employees, operates with little or no knowledge about the membership in, or drug operations of, other cells.

The head of each cell reports to a regional director who is responsible for the overall management of several cells. The regional director, in turn, reports directly to one of the drug lords of a particular organization or their designee based in Colombia. A rigid top-down command and control structure is characteristic of these groups. Trusted lieutenants of the organization in the U.S. have discretion in the day-to-day operations, but ultimate authority rests with the leadership in Colombia.

Upper echelon and management levels of these cells are normally comprised of family members or long-time close associates who can be trusted by the Colombian drug lords -- because their family members remain in Colombia as hostages to the cell members' good behavior -- to handle their day-to-day drug operations in the United States. The trusted personal nature of these organizations makes it that much harder to penetrate the organizations with confidential sources. That difficulty with penetration makes intercepting criminal telephone calls all the more vital. They report back to Colombia via cell phone, fax and other sophisticated communications methods. Colombian drug traffickers continually employ a variety of counter-surveillance techniques and tactics, such as fake drug transactions, using telephones they suspect are monitored, limited-time use of cloned cell phones (frequently a week or less), limited use of pagers (from 2 to 4 weeks), and use of calling cards. The top level managers of these Colombian

organizations increasingly use sophisticated communications and encryption technology, posing a severe challenge to law enforcement's ability to conduct effective investigations.

V. TERRORIST INVOLVEMENT IN THE DRUG TRADE

There is deep concern in DEA, as in the rest of the Administration and in the Congress, about the connection between the FARC and other terrorist groups in Colombia and the Drug Trade. This Summer's events in Colombia demonstrate the danger posed to the Colombian people by the terrorists. The Colombian government is now engaged in responding to this armed challenge. DEA will continue to pay close attention to FARC involvement in the drug trade. We will, together with our Colombian partners, take whatever steps are necessary to attack the international organized crime groups that are the driving force behind the drug trade and the armed groups that may be protecting them.

DEA has in the past demonstrated its ability and willingness to fight drug trafficking. For example, we participated in the struggle with Pablo Escobar in Colombia, a trafficker who turned to terrorism when the net was closing around him. DEA worked openly with the Colombian Police to hunt him down. We will work alongside our long-term colleagues in the CNP to indict and bring to justice any drug trafficker, FARC or otherwise, as long as the charges can be proven in court. DEA carries out its operations in partnership with the CNP.

An alliance of convenience between guerillas and traffickers is nothing new. Since the 1970s, drug traffickers based in Colombia have made temporary alliances of convenience with leftist guerillas, or with right wing groups. In each case, this has been done to secure protection for the drug interests. At other times, the drug traffickers have financed their own private armies to provide security services.

General reporting indicates that many elements of the FARC and the ELN raise funds through extortion, or by directly selling security services to traffickers. Their actions are by no means limited to dealing with the traffickers. The terrorists extort from all manner of economic activity in the areas in which they operate. In return for cash payments, or possibly in exchange for weapons, the terrorists protect cocaine laboratories, drug crops, clandestine airstrips, or other interests of the drug traffickers.

The terrorists are not the glue that holds the drug trade together. It is, however, certainly true that the "cash cow" represented by the drug trade has taken on a big, and probably growing role in financing the terrorists. If the traffickers did not buy security from the FARC or ELN, they would buy it from elsewhere -- as they have done in the past.

The frequent ground fire sustained by CNP aircraft when engaged in eradication missions over FARC or ELN controlled areas is indicative of the extent to which the terrorists will go to protect the drug interests. Some of these shootings may well have been angry peasants lashing out at a government target. In either case, these shooting incidents pose a threat to personnel

conducting counter-lab or eradication operations.

VI. LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Colombian National Police is a major law enforcement organization with a long and honored tradition of integrity. The CNP had some corruption problems in the 1980s and early 1990s, but took the needed steps to address that corruption and have moved on to aggressively attack the drug menace. Under the direct command of General Rosso Jose Serrano, the CNP has become recognized for its dedication, patriotism and commitment to integrity. The CNP has introduced fundamental changes in the force in order to make it a thoroughly modern and efficient institution within the context of Colombia and the international community.

General Serrano has been an advocate on behalf of the thousands of loyal and dedicated Colombian National Police officers within the ranks. He has encouraged their motivation, even in the face of the tragic losses of over 900 fellow police officers in the last three years alone. The fact that the CNP, and other members of Colombia's law enforcement community, were able and willing to pursue operations against the drug underworld is a testament to their professionalism and dedication.

All of the top Cali drug lords either have been captured by the CNP, have died, were killed, or have surrendered to Colombian authorities. These unprecedented drug law enforcement successes were the culmination of years of investigative efforts by the CNP, with active support from DEA. Unfortunately, Miguel Rodriguez Orejuela and his associates, who comprised the most powerful international organized crime group in history initially received shamefully short sentences for their crimes. In January 1997, Gilberto was sentenced to 10½ years in prison on drug trafficking charges. As a result of Colombia's lenient sentencing laws, however, Gilberto may serve only five years. Miguel, originally sentenced to 9 years, was later sentenced to 21 years on Colombian charges based on evidence supplied by the United States Government in the Tampa, Florida, evidence-sharing case. Miguel is expected to serve less than 13 years in prison. The Colombian judicial system must be strengthened to that the traffickers, once convicted, are sentenced to terms commensurate with their crimes.

The CNP continues to pursue significant drug investigations in cooperation with the DEA. The CNP is also aggressively pursuing significant counterdrug operations against cocaine processing laboratories, transportation networks, and trafficker command and control elements. We expect these operations will result in prosecutions in both Colombia and the United States.

VII. CONCLUSION: HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

By way of conclusion, we can and should continue to identify and build cases against the leaders of the new criminal groups from Colombia. These criminals have already moved to make our task more difficult by withdrawing from positions of vulnerability and maintaining a much

lower profile than their predecessors. A number of initiatives hold particular promise for success:

- ◆ The U.S. Embassy's Information Analysis/Operations Center (IAOC) will be increasingly utilized to coordinate and analyze tactical information regarding the activities of drug trafficking groups active in the Colombian territories south and east of the Andes Mountains. The IAOC is comprised of Embassy personnel from the DEA Bogota Country Office and U.S. Military's Tactical Analysis Team. Support and staffing also are provided by the Defense Attache Office and the State Department. This organization should be the central clearinghouse for counterdrug law enforcement cooperation in Colombia.
- ◆ The special unit program, funded under the Andean Initiative, will make it possible to convert existing partially vetted units of the CNP into fully vetted teams. These teams of investigators will work closely with DEA and will conduct high level drug investigations.
- ◆ There are several cutting-edge, sophisticated investigations currently underway, which benefit from the closest possible cooperation between the DEA and CNP. In the very near future these investigations should lead to the dismantling of major portions of the most significant drug trafficking organizations operating in Colombia today.

The DEA remains committed to our primary goal of targeting and arresting the most significant drug traffickers in the world today. In particular, we will continue to work with our partners in Colombia to improve our cooperative efforts against international drug smuggling. The ultimate test of success will come when we bring to justice the drug lords who control their vast empires of crime which bring misery to the nations in which they operate. They must be arrested, tried and convicted, and sentenced in their own countries to prison terms commensurate with their crimes, or, as appropriate, extradited to the United States to face American justice.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee today. I will be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

Mr. MICA. Thank you. We'll withhold questions until we hear from Michael Shifter, who is a senior fellow and program director at the Inter-American Dialogue. Welcome. You're recognized, sir.

Mr. SHIFTER. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the subcommittee's invitation to testify at this very important and timely hearing. Just a year ago I had an opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere on the political and security situation in Colombia.

The main point I want to convey today is the following. The goal of the United States should be to help improve the Colombian Government's capabilities and effectiveness. We should help the government reach a political solution to the country's intense conflict from a position of strength. We are currently not doing all we can to advance this goal.

Colombia desperately needs political reconciliation. This is the first and critical step in what will inevitably be a long-term process. The ultimate aim is to construct a more inclusive society and more effective institutions. President Pastrana, along with most Colombians, instinctively understand this. It is hard to imagine a successful effort to fight drug production and trafficking without a strong and stable Colombian Government. It is crucial to first establish a greater measure of authority and control over the forces in conflict. For Colombians, this is the priority.

The Pastrana government faces two fundamental challenges. The first is to, clear and comprehensive strategy to help Colombia move toward greater reconciliation. The second is to forge a national consensus behind such a strategy. The strategy should attempt to do three things. Set firm goals, spell out what the Colombian Government is prepared and not prepared to accept in any negotiations, and organize resources accordingly. Colombians will have to work out the details of such a strategy and assume responsibility for carrying it out.

The strategy will no doubt include many aspects. These may range from economic support to help with mediation efforts, from development assistance to the strengthening and professionalization of the military. The United States can and should help Colombia deal with its difficult challenges. We have many reasons to be interested in what happens in Colombia and to do what we can to contribute to a more prosperous, stable, and democratic country. This means engaging with the Pastrana government in the most respectful and constructive way. It also means consulting widely among our hemispheric neighbors and other friends to mobilize and sustain adequate backing for President Pastrana's approach.

It is crucial, however, that the support provided by the United States or the international community be consistent with and help reinforce the strategic purposes set by the Pastrana government.

It is not surprising that some United States officials are edging toward support for Colombian security forces. The key question, however, is what the United States realistically expects to accomplish with such support. Is it in fact the purpose of United States/Colombia policy to defeat the guerrillas? Is it to reduce drug production? Or is it to enhance the Colombian Government's leverage to negotiate peace with the insurgents?

For many the answer is simple. All of the above. They regard the guerrillas and those involved in the drug trade, producers and traffickers alike, as virtually indistinguishable. These groups are in fact interconnected in complex ways, but they're distinct and ought to be understood as such. No one disputes that the guerrillas, the insurgents, draw substantially from the drug economy for their strength.

Important consequences flow from failing to distinguish between guerrillas on the one hand and drug producers and traffickers on the other. For one, the tradeoffs among different policy aims tend to be ignored. We should realize that not all objectives have equal weight and not all policies can be pursued at the same time. That is why we should keep our main objective, improving the Colombian Government's capabilities, in sharp focus. Achieving peace with the guerrillas and reducing drug production will come about only as a consequence of that improvement.

What is crucial is to face squarely what military aid to Colombia actually means. Should the United States make defeating the guerrillas its main goal? If so, how much would that cost and how long would it take? Once undertaken, how far is the United States prepared to go? The Colombian situation has all of the elements of a slippery slope or mission creep but military assistance is at best only part of what needs to be a comprehensive approach to help Colombia deal with its underlying problems.

That is why a wide ranging program of reform and reconciliation in Colombia is essential. Increased United States support for the Colombian armed forces should be seriously considered but that step should be an appendage of a broader strategy designed to strengthen democratic institutions and obtain political reconciliation. Too often, pursuing peace and supporting the military are regarded as mutually exclusive. They should not be. That false dichotomy only further polarizes the already difficult politics of Colombia's peace effort.

As I mentioned at the outset, the fundamental goal of the United States should be to help improve the Colombian Government's capabilities and effectiveness to enable it to negotiate from strength. This is the best way we could contribute to the kind of profound institutional change Colombians desperately want and deserve.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Shifter follows.]

**Testimony before the House Committee on Government Reform
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources**

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Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the Subcommittee's invitation to testify at this very important and timely hearing. Just a year ago I had the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere on the political and security situation in Colombia.

The main point I want to convey today is this: the goal of the United States should be to help improve the Colombian government's capabilities and effectiveness. We should help the government reach a political solution to the country's conflict, from a position of strength. We are currently not doing all we can to advance this goal.

By any measure, the past year has been a troubling one for Colombia. The situation has deteriorated on nearly all fronts. Insecurity has spread, drug production has gone up, and the economy has worsened. The movement of Colombians has been the most eloquent measure of the decline. More than one million are displaced within the country's borders. Those who are able to leave Colombia are doing so in droves.

The sense of disappointment is especially profound in light of the high expectations generated by the election of President Andres Pastrana last June, and his peace initiative announced shortly thereafter. No one believed that effort would be easy. But it has been even more difficult than anticipated. There have been problems and frustrations at every turn.

No one should doubt that most Colombians are committed to peace. They are divided only about the best way to go about achieving it. There are serious doubts about the willingness of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the country's principal guerrilla group, to negotiate in good faith. The National Liberation Army (ELN), the country's second guerrilla group, has carried out some brazen kidnappings that defy credibility. And the country's formidable paramilitary groups continue to commit atrocities. All of these forces are seeking a role in talks with the government. They want a place at any peace table.

The country desperately needs political reconciliation. This is the first and critical step in what will inevitably be a long-term process. The ultimate aim is to construct a more inclusive society and more effective and responsive institutions. President Pastrana, along with most Colombians, instinctively understand this. It is hard to imagine a successful effort to fight drug production and trafficking without a strong and stable Colombian government. It is crucial to first establish a greater measure of authority and control over the forces in conflict. For Colombians, this is the priority.

The Pastrana government faces two fundamental challenges. The first is to devise a clear and comprehensive strategy to help Colombia move towards greater reconciliation. The second is to forge a national consensus behind such a strategy. The strategy should attempt to do three things: set firm objectives, spell out what the Colombian government is prepared and not prepared to accept in its negotiations, and organize resources accordingly. Colombians will have to work out the details of such a strategy, and assume responsibility for carrying it out. The strategy will no doubt include many aspects. These may range from economic support to help with mediation efforts, from development assistance to the strengthening and professionalization of the military.

The United States can and should help Colombia deal with its difficult challenges. We have many reasons to be interested in what happens in Colombia, and to do what we can to contribute to a more prosperous, stable and democratic country. This means engaging with the Pastrana government in the most respectful and constructive way. It also means consulting widely among our hemispheric neighbors and other friends to mobilize and sustain adequate backing for President Pastrana's approach. It is crucial, however, that the support provided by the United States or the international community be consistent with and help reinforce the strategic purposes set by the Pastrana government.

As conditions in Colombia deteriorate, Washington's impulse to "do something" and "get tough" is understandable, even legitimate. Such an impulse, however, needs to flow from a hard-headed assessment of what goals are realistic and feasible, a clear understanding of how far the United States is prepared to go, and a rigorous analysis of possible consequences and ramifications. Otherwise, the approach taken by the United States risks becoming a kind of spasm or convulsion – rather than a coherent, carefully thought out, policy.

The United States is, of course, already involved in Latin America's third largest country. Colombia ranks third, after Israel and Egypt, in receiving US security assistance. This year, the United States is providing some \$289 million to Colombia in counternarcotics assistance, three times the amount we gave in 1998, which had already doubled each of the preceding two years. The bulk of the money goes to Colombia's national police; the country's military receives about \$40 million. In addition, the United States is sharing intelligence information with the military.

Few doubt that more – perhaps substantially more – is yet to come. Several weeks ago, after meeting in Washington with Colombia's defense minister and armed forces chief, General Barry McCaffrey proposed increasing the amount of support to drug-producing countries by \$1 billion, nearly \$600 million of which would go to Colombia. General McCaffrey defended his proposal by citing the “explosion” in cocaine production and spreading insecurity. Fighting drugs, in fact, remains the only rationale for US Colombia policy that is politically popular and palatable with the American people.

It is not surprising that some US policy officials are edging toward greater support for Colombia's security forces. The key question, however, is what the United States realistically expects to accomplish with such support. Is it, in fact, the purpose of US Colombia policy to defeat the guerrillas? Is it to reduce drug production? Or is it to enhance the Colombian government's leverage to negotiate peace with the insurgents?

For many US officials, the answer is simple: all of the above. They regard the guerrillas and those involved in the drug trade, producers and traffickers alike, as virtually indistinguishable. These groups are in fact interconnected in complex ways. But they are distinct and ought to be understood as such.

Important consequences flow from failing to distinguish between guerrillas on the one hand, and drug producers and traffickers, on the other. For one, trade-offs among different policy aims tend to be ignored. We should realize that not all objectives have equal weight – and not all policies, however sound and well-intentioned, can be pursued at the same time. That is why we should keep our main objective – improving the Colombian government's capabilities – in sharp focus. Achieving peace with the guerrillas, and reducing drug production, will come about only as a consequence of that improvement.

The evolving US policy toward Colombia raises important human rights questions. The country's human rights-situation is dire. The vast majority of all political killings are committed by the country's expanding paramilitary groups. These groups' links with the armed forces are varied and complicated, often depending on the region. Confrontations between the armed forces and the paramilitary groups have been rare. The US law requiring any military unit that receives US assistance to be thoroughly vetted should be fully honored and enforced.

What is crucial is to face squarely what military aid to Colombia actually means. Should the United States make defeating the guerrillas its main goal? If so, how much would that cost and how long would it take? Once undertaken, how far is the United States prepared to go? The Colombian situation has all of the elements of a "slippery slope," or "mission creep." But military assistance is, at best, only part of what needs to be a comprehensive approach to help Colombia deal with its underlying problems.

That is why a wide-ranging program of reform and reconciliation in Colombia is so essential. Increased US support for professionalizing the Colombian armed forces should be seriously considered. But that step should be an appendage of a broader strategy designed to strengthen democratic institutions and attain political reconciliation. Too often, pursuing peace and supporting the military are regarded as mutually exclusive goals. They should not be. The false and overdrawn dichotomy only further polarizes the already difficult politics of Colombia's peace effort.

As I mentioned at the outset, the fundamental goal of the United States should be to help improve the Colombian government's capabilities and effectiveness, to enable it to negotiate from strength. This is the best way we can contribute to the kind of profound institutional change Colombians desperately want, and deserve.

Mr. MICA. Thank you for your testimony. Mr. Beers, as my dentist said before he was going to take out my wisdom teeth, I'll try to make this as quick and painless as possible.

Mr. BEERS. That was my intent in not reading a longer statement, sir.

Mr. MICA. Well, I think you see sort of unanimous consent that we want the equipment to get there, that Congress has appropriated a significant amount of money and we keep hearing it over and over. It's now the third largest recipient of foreign aid but the equipment isn't getting there and we still have four upgraded Huey II helicopters sitting on the tarmac in Ozark, AL, waiting to be shipped.

Mr. Burton, the chairman of the committee, went through a litany of delays that we've had. Can you tell us where we are? What's our hope of getting these there and the latest timetable?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir, I can. With respect to the 10 Huey helicopters that were being upgraded to the Huey II configuration, we began the contracting in March of last year. The delivery of the kits, that is, the portion of the plane that has to be installed in the older helicopter in order to bring it up, were delivered according to a schedule that had been proposed by Bell Helicopter. Those kits began arriving in their full form in November of last year. There were some delays in some portions of those kits which caused them all not to arrive on their original schedule.

There was also a misestimate with respect to the amount of time with which it would take to actually bring the helicopters into the configuration required. That is a combination both of taking older helicopters, which they were, and bringing them up to full capability, and then also installing the kits. So there was a delay which resulted there.

And third, there was some additional requirements that were requested by the Colombian National Police after the first two helicopters were supplied in the February timeframe which added some time to submitting the design specifications and adding that equipment. That amounted to what is for you and for me a delay, which is far too long—

Mr. MICA. But they are on the tarmac now—

Mr. BEERS. But they are on the tarmac. The first of the four was received in June for transportation. The second two were received after the middle of July and the fourth is in receipt now. We contracted for the plane. After we have the three, the Air Force provided us with transportation free of charge for next week and that is the reason that there are—

Mr. MICA. That's what I was trying to get to—

Mr. BEERS [continuing]. There are four now ready to go. We don't ship normally smaller amounts than four or five.

Mr. MICA. They'll be there by next Friday or Saturday. The next question would be Congress also authorized and appropriated money last year for six Blackhawk helicopters for the Colombian National Police. To date, how many of these helicopters have been delivered, are actually in Colombia?

Mr. BEERS. Sir, there are no Blackhawk helicopters in Colombia at this particular point in time. The money was made available for signing contracts in February of this year. The contracts were

signed immediately. The Army allowed us to move to the front of the line to take Blackhawk helicopters for this particular project. The specifications had been agreed upon during the timeframe from the passage of the Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act until the funds were provided to us in final form, so there was no delay with respect to that.

So the helicopters, we'll have three of them that will be delivered in November and three more which will be delivered in March with pilots, mechanics, and spares so that they will all be ready. The Colombia National Police had neither the pilots nor the spares available at the time. They chose not to train on helicopters other than the ones which they had ordered so that a possible speeding up of the aircraft delivery time with pilots might have been possible. That's their choice and that's the delivery schedule.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Beers, one of the latest rumors to float is that now the lawyers in the State Department have suggested the need for an export license to transfer the Blackhawk helicopters to Colombia. Is that the case? Have you heard that may be required?

Mr. BEERS. No, sir, I have not heard that may be required, but we will comply with the law.

Mr. MICA. We also lost one aircraft, an ARL, airborne reconnaissance low plane, and I think that there have been listed as requirements that we may need as many as 15. We've lost one and the cost of those is around \$30 million a piece. Mr. Sheridan, is there going to be a supplemental request for this equipment?

Mr. SHERIDAN. At this time, Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure. Certainly we have been in discussion with General McCaffrey's office about a possible supplemental and what it would look like within the department. We're certainly looking at the various programs that would make good candidates for such a list. Obviously with the loss of the ARL, that would be a logical candidate, but it's pretty early.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Barr asked the question about if the administration was preparing a supplemental—emergency supplemental request and he named some agencies. Is your agency working with either the drug czar or anyone else from the administration to come up with numbers to present to Congress for a new supplemental request or emergency supplemental?

Mr. SHERIDAN. I have to be careful, Mr. Chairman, because I'm not a Comptroller type and I don't know what form it will—such a thing if it comes to pass, will eventually take but I know we are looking at programs right now. We are working with our Comptroller. They are in discussions with OMB but it is very, very early in that kind of process and how that all ends up playing out is above my pay grade, but we are certainly looking at it.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Beers, you are working on part of that request with the drug czar?

Mr. BEERS. We are, sir.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Ledwith, are you involved? Have they asked DEA the figures?

Mr. LEDWITH. Sir, I'm not personally involved but I'm aware those discussions are under way at the more senior levels of our agency and Department of Justice.

Mr. MICA. Finally, Mr. Beers, do you have any idea when the agency or the drug czar might be coming back to Congress with a supplemental request?

Mr. BEERS. Sir, I can't say with precision when it will be that that will be ready. I just don't know, although I think Congressman Souder probably provided us with the most accurate expression of how this is all going to take place when he spoke about a mid-September timeframe.

Mr. MICA. Thank you.

Mr. Cummings, you're recognized.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. If I were just one of the many people watching this right now on C-SPAN, I think I'd be a bit frustrated when we think about sending a space capsule all around the—in outer space and then get it to land at a precise moment in a precise place. I don't know that much about the military, and then they sit here and they hear all the difficulties that we are having with these Blackhawk helicopters and the Hueys. I tell you, I'm sure it gets kind of frustrating to them and I'm sure they're sitting there right now just kind of scratching their heads and there are some of them that are sitting in my district probably looking out a window right now as drug deals are taking place and they're trying to put the two together.

One of the biggest complaints I get in my district is that drugs are flowing in but the people in my district own no planes. They own no ships, no trains, no buses, and they're coming from somewhere. And so when they hear this, and I go back and I say to them this afternoon—I'll be back there in about an hour or two—and they say we saw you on C-SPAN and you see, I told you. I told you that we should be doing a better job and I heard what they said about those Blackhawk helicopters and see, Mr. Cummings, and see, they had become very cynical and they believe that the government in some instances is almost a part of allowing this—these drugs to come into their communities.

With that statement, let me ask you this, Mr. Beers. You told us a moment ago that—correct me if I'm wrong—that we'll have three Blackhawks in November and three more in March; is that right?

Mr. BEERS. That's correct, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And as you were going down the list of the problems with the Hueys, you said three things that I have listed here. You said there were delays, there was a misestimate, and then there were additional requirements. And I'm just trying to figure out how—how do we—what happens to us here as we get a little frustrated because we come back and—how do we know we're not going to hear the same excuses over and over again? I don't know whether you heard Mr. Ose's comments a little earlier about his frustration because I'll tell you, I think we're sort of—we're pretty much in agreement on this. We want to see things happen and this is already a slow process up here. But we do like to see things happen because people are dying as we speak. People are getting addicted as we argue.

So I'm just trying—can you give us some assurances so that we—I always say a lot of times what happens is people get caught up in motion, commotion, and emotion and no results. And so the question is, is whether when the time comes in November how can

we be assured that these Blackhawk helicopters are going to be where they're supposed to be, doing what they're supposed to do, so that people watching this and the Congress can have the kind of faith and confidence that they need? Can you understand the frustration?

Mr. BEERS. Sir, thank you for the opportunity to respond. I answered the questions which were asked me. Let me give you the answer now that tells the picture of the entire story.

We have focused on the delivery of some helicopters and they are important and I don't mean to diminish that. Last year INL and the Colombian National Police police sprayed 66,000 hectares of coca in Colombia. We sprayed 3,000 hectares of opium poppy in Colombia. This year to date we have sprayed 7,500 hectares of opium poppy and we have sprayed 27,500 hectares of coca. That is the effort that INL and the Colombian National Police make together.

In addition to that, we have raided labs. The Colombian National Police captured approximately 30 metric tons of cocaine last year and they are on a similar pace this year. There has been no delay, no delay in the prosecution of the campaign against opium poppy for lack of helicopters. We began that campaign in earnest this fall and we have not had 1 day that we didn't fly because those helicopters weren't there. There are adequate helicopters that are there. They are flying when they can fly because of the weather, but we still are continuing to make that effort. These helicopters will help expand that effort but we also have other needs. What we do with most of our money, what we do with most of our support is provide assistance to the Colombian National Police and their air wing to keep their planes and our planes in the air. These will be additional planes. They will help. But there's been an effort that's been ongoing throughout this period of time. I want these new helicopters to get there as quickly as possible but we will go with what we have when we have it and we will continue to make a significant effort, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I am so glad that I asked you that question so that you could say what you just said. We need to hear that. The American people need to hear that. And I'm glad you said it the way you said it. I really mean that. Because those are the kinds of things that we need to know. And I agree with you after you said what you just said that maybe we are putting too much of a spotlight on one thing and not dealing with all the other good things that are happening. Now I feel a little bit better about going back to my district this afternoon and I can—I'm sure they'll quote you. They'll probably even remember your name. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. SOUDER. Just so nobody thinks that we just do this to have a public debate for television, we've argued in hotel lobbies in Santiago. We've argued in bathrooms. And I have a—I want to plunge into some of the particulars and some clarifications but I have a couple of particular questions that I want to clarify. Are the helicopters to Colombia the top priority? In other words, are they designated what I understand is FAD, force activity designator, so it's the top priority in getting military equipment over to places

like Chile, Argentina, or other places where we're not at war? Is it the top priority?

Mr. BEERS. We have requested that of the Department of Defense. We have not yet received an answer from that, sir, but with respect to the helicopters themselves with respect to INL's effort, they are our top priority at this point in time in terms of the delivery of product here that needs to be down there.

Mr. SOUDER. When did the request go to the Department of Defense?

Mr. BEERS. In June.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Sheridan, do you know why that hasn't been acted on?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Congressman, I'll have to get back to you on that. I will check into that.

Mr. SOUDER. Thanks. This is—I mean, this isn't years at least. It's months, but when there is a war going on and we heard about the nature of the crisis, I would hope that we could move as fast as we seem to in other areas of the world where we may not have the same compelling national police interests, which was an editorial comment, I realize.

Another very specific question. We have really struggled with the Leahy amendment and how to work with the applications of the Leahy amendment, and my understanding is that there was an allegation of a human rights violation lodged against a senior officer of a brigade sized Colombian unit, the result of blocking any United States assistance to that brigade and that Colombia has very few brigade sized units which are capable of conducting offensive operations, so the strict interpretation of the Leahy amendment has resulted in weakening their ability, and our ability to do that.

Would you have the State Department's legal advisor provide this committee with some detailed recommendations and legislative language to address the current limitations imposed by the Leahy amendment? Because we have some belief that they are willing to kind of work with this too, that part of the problem here, and I have directly talked to their defense ministers and military commanders too as have many others and they are trying to vet the units.

In fact, we have said that we want to be so careful that even when there is a complaint lodged, but if a complaint is lodged, are there ways we can get the individual separated so we don't in effect shut down a whole brigade because of a complaint lodged against one individual? Because if we are in the nature of the crisis that we've heard about today, this is really micromanaging to the detriment of not only the United States and Colombia but the entire world, as we hear it's going to Europe and everywhere else.

Mr. BEERS. Sir, I will take that question back and we will provide you an answer in that regard. Let me say on behalf of the Colombian Government and our effort to deal with this issue to date, part of the reason that you all are hearing about this counter-narcotics battalion which is being established now is a realization on the part of the government of Colombia in conjunction with consultations with us to rebuild units in order that these issues are not relevant to the discussion of assistance to those kinds of units.

That is, I think, a valuable and important move on the part of the Government of Colombia that will, even without any change in legislative language, make this process a lot simpler in terms of our ability to certify that the units are eligible for assistance and to maintain constant oversight of that as the legislation requires us to do.

Mr. SOUDER. Another question I have is that regarding these counterdrug battalions, it is my understanding that they're to be activated in December, that there is no particular budget for air mobility for these units. I would hope that any supplemental request that comes up or emergency requests would address this question. We have worked for years.

I would argue we're at least 3 years behind where we wanted the Blackhawks into the CNP and I'm very concerned that those are going to be diverted into this other important battalion. I'm not arguing against it because you have to have both fighting but we had a specific intent of Congress and we want to make sure on the record that there's an understanding that there needs to be a budget for this battalion if we're going to do that, not transferring what we committed to the CNP.

Mr. BEERS. Sir, I can assure you that the Blackhawks that you all asked be provided to the CNP will be provided to the CNP and the ones that have come off the line will be the ones that will be provided. There will be no substitute or any delay caused by any displacement for another requirement.

Let me indicate to you that with respect to the issue of the mobility of the counternarcotics battalion and the counternarcotics effort on the part of the Colombian military that we have proposed to them and they have accepted and we are in the process now of working through the details an interim lift capability which will involve the provision of certain helicopters that are within the INL inventory to give them an interim lift capability until such time as they have the Blackhawks that they would like.

So we will be doing our part with respect to assets that are already within INL's control in order to make sure that this battalion is in a position to move as soon as they're through with their training because, as General McCaffrey said, if you wanted to buy a Blackhawk today and you put your money on the table absent any other provisions, you have to wait 25 months before that Blackhawk comes off the line and is available.

Mr. SOUDER. And I would again hasten to point out that I agree with that point, which is why we started this process 4 years ago. I am not one who is going to take that real lightly because if we would have started this process, we would now be talking about how we would be addressing the full—

Mr. BEERS. And my ability to have the aircraft in order to provide the interim lift capability is a direct result of you and your committee's and this Congress's efforts to provide us with the resources and we appreciate that very much.

Mr. SOUDER. I'd like to move—I know Chairman Gilman came in so I appreciate giving the extra time here to—you made some comments earlier that I want to clarify and try to put this in context briefly or we're going to get really arcane real fast as we've argued over even the guns and the bullets in the different helicopters we're

sending down and the cost of the bullets I should say as to which gun we were going to do. That first off that I think there's no disagreement with your earlier point in response to Mr. Cummings that nobody should think that we've stopped efforts anywhere along the line and that the State Department and the Colombian National Police and Colombian Government have been aggressive in trying to do what they can with the resources that they have.

However, we also heard earlier today that this has exploded in Colombia and clearly those resources are not sufficient in that as we were squeezing, particularly with President Fujimori in Peru and President Banzer in Bolivia. We in effect moved the problem and we should have been able to anticipate that some because now we're in these 2-year lead times. General Serrano said in fact he needs 100 helicopters to effectively do his job because even if 80 percent of them are flying, the problem has increased, the nature of the problem increased, and the interim solution that we worked out as we've heard, the Bell helicopters and, quite frankly, we had some discussion they weren't in the greatest shape but they were in terrible shape and that it costs extra funds.

I do want to say for the record too as we've discussed this a number of times, some of the decisions in the alterations were from General Serrano. Some of the decisions were in my opinion the fault at our end. Certain basic things were not in the helicopters that would have been expected to be there.

Other things we were arguing about changing, we wanted, as some people said, the Cadillac version of the guns. There were questions about the price of the bullets in relationship to those guns and a number of things. Some of the helicopters didn't even come with basic things and that the delays implication here was—is that a significant part of the delays were coming because of modifications from the Colombia National Police and I believe some may have been but even those were because of policy debates here as well. Things that would—you would normally expect to have in it so they were not unreasonable demands, for example, to have a gun or a gun holder or a machine gun holder. There were some things that the Colombian National Police were coming back with that weren't kind of extras. They weren't like electric windows or something. They were kind of basic things in helicopters that in my opinion we should have had going down. Because I wanted to clarify because it sounded like they were just being overly picky as opposed to we in effect sent them some shells almost in some of these cases.

Mr. BEERS. Sir, if I gave the impression that there was one particular area that was the primary area of responsibility for the delay, I did not mean to do that and I'm not prepared to assign responsibility, first responsibility here, there, or elsewhere. I was simply trying to give the committee a sense of the variety of issues that caused this.

First, let me say with respect to the issue of the first two which arrived down there, they did not arrive down there without the knowledge of the Colombian National Police of what they were coming with. When they got down there and saw what they had, they had some desires to make some changes. That's understandable. This was the first time that they had received this. So what

we did was to try to make those changes to those helicopters and to make sure that the subsequent helicopters also had those changes on them.

Mr. SOUDER. Could I ask you a specific question related to that specific point, that partly that was an agreement for those helicopters that we struck. It was not originally the request—

Mr. BEERS. Are you talking about the Bell 212's, sir, or are you talking about the Huey IIs?

Mr. SOUDER. Both of those were neither their choice. First we upgraded the Huey IIs and then we did the Bells because the Blackhawks had been delayed for such a long period of time, but in those different cases why wouldn't you have talked to the CNP first about that or more informed them because in effect they were new in this. Here's what's—you said that once they got them, they wanted no unreasonable modifications, but why wouldn't that discussion have occurred at the front end?

Mr. BEERS. We did have that discussion beforehand, sir, and what I'm saying is when they saw them compared to other helicopters, they had some changes that they thought they wanted to have made and that's what we tried to do was to make those changes so they would be available for them. There was nothing that was withheld from them. These are discussions that we have with them on a regular basis about what it is that we purchase and provide for them. We don't just give them things that we think that they need without talking with them.

Mr. SOUDER. I realize the chairman's been very generous. I would just like to say that part of this I think is that they are in this case the—they are adjusting as best they can to get the best resources they can from us and then—but it is not—because they say we would like this upgraded or compared—they get new helicopters and say hey, we thought we would like these to be like the other INL does not mean they're holding up the process. It means that to some degree they're having to take what they can and then seek out upgrades from us and we need to continue to work through that. I'll yield back.

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir. That is absolutely our intent as well, to work this as quickly as possible, to get them the equipment as quickly as possible and to get it to them in the form that they want it in.

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman from Indiana. I'd now like to recognize the chairman of the International Relations Committee, also a member of our subcommittee, Mr. Gilman from New York.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I can't thank you enough for continuing with this concern on our narcotics strategy and what we can do to help Colombia. I regret I had to leave to go to another meeting, but I'm pleased I was able to get back here for this panel.

Secretary Beers, we're now convinced that we're going to try to provide to General Serrano all of the helicopters that he needs. He's talked about if he had 100 helicopters, he could eradicate the whole crop within a 2-year period. Are we going to be supportive of that request?

Mr. BEERS. Sir, General Serrano has never requested 100 helicopters from me. I will talk to him about that, but I can't say I've

ever heard about that. We certainly talked on a regular basis, including earlier this week, with respect to various levels of requests. I have no requests for 100 helicopters.

Mr. GILMAN. It was my impression that his staff had shared that information.

Mr. BEERS. I have not ever seen that request, sir. I will check with my staff, but I can't say that I'm aware of it.

Mr. GILMAN. If a request comes to you, will you be able to support his request?

Mr. BEERS. We will with the available funds look if we can fulfill that request. I can't commit to you 100 helicopters because I have to figure out how to pay for them or we have to figure out how to pay for them.

Mr. GILMAN. We'll work with you if you're in agreement that this has to be done and you come back with us with a proposal. I'm sure that a number of the members on this committee particularly will try to be of help to you.

Mr. BEERS. I appreciate that, sir.

Mr. GILMAN. Secretary Beers, as to the helicopters assigned to Colombia; 23 are in flying status and 15 are not flying because of maintenance problems and lack of parts. Just in June 1998 you assured us that any twin engine helicopters going down there, and I quote you, will not be hangar queens and yet he's got about 15 that are "hangar queens" right now. A year and several million dollars later only two of the six INL provided Bell 212's are flying.

Can you tell us what we can do to beef that up, this situation momentarily, without waiting for a whole new process to go through to get additional flying equipment?

Mr. BEERS. Sir, with respect to the six Bell 212's which were provided, it is correct that today on the flight line two are available to fly. Of the remaining four, one was crashed not too long ago and has been destroyed. Of the other, the second was the subject of a hard landing by the Colombian National Police, which has caused significant damage to the plane. That plane is currently being repaired by us and them, and we will put it back on the flight line as soon as it is available.

With respect to the other two, one is down for scheduled maintenance; the other one is down for a fuel cell replacement process, which is under way on a priority basis.

With respect to the helicopters, other than the one which was crashed and the one which had the hard landing which has had to be taken out of service, that is with respect to five until just recently and with respect to four now, the operational readiness rate of those helicopters has been at about 65 percent, which exceeds the operational readiness rate of any other element of the Colombian National Police Air Service.

So to say that something was a hanger queen by definition never flies. These Bell 212's fly. They don't fly every day, but no plane does. They have to spend some time in maintenance. You roughly fly for an hour and maintain something like that for 2, 3, 4, 5 hours, depending upon the aircraft.

So I believe that I delivered helicopters that were flyable, and that they have been flyable within the terms of what one would normally expect out of helicopters.

Mr. GILMAN. Secretary Beers—and I appreciate your response. If that's a normal kind of problem, these maintenance problems, crashes, et cetera—if he has only 23 that are flyable right now, it would seem to me that we would want to add something on an expedient manner to give them more air capability, rather than wait for a whole new project. Can't we move some additional equipment down now?

Mr. BEERS. Sir, we will talk with the Colombian National Police and see what we can do.

Mr. GILMAN. We would welcome that, and anything we can do to assist them in what they're trying to do I think would be helpful. And if we're worried about the massive amount of illicit narcotics coming out of that country, whatever we can do to help them interdict, that would be very helpful and to eradicate it at the same time.

Are you going to be making a new budgetary request for the year 2000, and will that be in addition to what you've asked for this year? Is it going to be an increase? What will be your budgetary requests for the coming year?

Mr. BEERS. For fiscal year 2000?

Mr. GILMAN. Yes, fiscal year 2000.

Mr. BEERS. With respect to the discussions which are currently under way which General McCaffrey spoke of and others have spoken of, there is a review under way of what the situation in Colombia is like, and as we come to the conclusion of that review, we will be back to inform you of what our views are on that. But at this particular point in time, I can't tell you that there will or will not be a budget request, because that hasn't been decided yet, and it's not my position to say anything about that, sir.

But we will—as General McCaffrey promised to you, be back to you when we have—

Mr. GILMAN. What is your general thinking right now? Knowing what the problem is and knowing the inadequacy of what we've been doing up to date, what is your thoughts? Are you thinking about an increase right now or a decrease?

Mr. BEERS. Sir, I'm not at liberty to tell you what the deliberations within the administration are.

Mr. GILMAN. I'm asking what your recommendations would be.

Mr. BEERS. I understand, sir, and I'm part of an administration and part of a team. In my written statement, I submitted that I think and we all at the State Department believe that this situation in Colombia is a very serious situation and needs very careful review. Anything that we do in Colombia—and we have heard from a variety of members of the committees about how difficult the choices will be. You've also heard from witnesses about how difficult the choices would be.

It would be premature at this point in time for me to tell you what the recommendation could or should be, in part because part of this process is critically dependent upon what the Colombian Government is prepared to do and thinks. And while General McCaffrey has had one round of discussions and Under Secretary Pickering will have another round of discussions next week, all of that is part of building the process to the point that we actually

have something that we have come to a judgment on and something that we're prepared to do.

And at this point in time, Congressman, I'm not in a position to tell you what that ought to be.

Mr. GILMAN. Well, I would like to recommend—I'm sure my colleagues would like to recommend to you that we make certain that we provide the kind of resources that are needed down there to accomplish what we're seeking to do and that's to eradicate the supply and to interdict the supply coming to our Nation.

Mr. BEERS. Thank you, sir. We appreciate the support you've given us over the years.

Mr. GILMAN. Let me thank you, Mr. Beers.

Now, let me refer now to Mr. Sheridan of the Defense Department.

As you know, Mr. Sheridan, we helped the Mexican military obtain 70 or more excess Hueys several years ago. We've now been informed that they plan to rid themselves of nearly 50 of these old choppers. Can't we arrange to have some of those choppers that are still operational be upgraded to superHuey status by use by the police in Colombia to fight drugs at a fairly reasonable cost to us, since the Mexicans are about to unload those?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Well, let me first say that, regarding the helicopters in Mexico, it is the case that we are bringing them back. There will be, I believe, 20 that will remain. But I have to be very clear that that Department of Defense authorities do not allow us to spend funds for upgrading helicopters and then transferring them to a third party. We're not permitted to do that. What we usually end up doing is working with Randy on those kinds of arrangements.

Mr. GILMAN. Well, it seems you're pretty close to each other even at this table.

Mr. BEERS. And with our discussions about budgets and activities and programs, yes, sir.

Mr. GILMAN. But let's talk about the efficiency of this kind of a project. Here you're taking 50 choppers back from Mexico. When will they be back with us?

Mr. SHERIDAN. They will be back soon.

Mr. GILMAN. How soon?

Mr. SHERIDAN. If my latest information is correct, the first ones will be moved back by truck imminently, if not already departed Mexico.

Mr. GILMAN. So some are on their way already.

Mr. SHERIDAN. Yeah, could be.

Mr. GILMAN. What will it take to make them operational for Colombians?

Mr. BEERS. Money.

Mr. GILMAN [continuing]. How much would it take to make these operational?

Mr. SHERIDAN. I think the first step—and we will have them back in a central facility. The first step will be a very detailed examination, tail number to tail number, just to—

Mr. GILMAN. Just approximately what would it take to make one of these operational? Most of them are operational now, as I understand it.

Mr. SHERIDAN. Especially to upgrade, probably a couple million, isn't it?

Mr. BEERS. The upgrades, sir, the kit alone is \$1.4 billion.

Mr. GILMAN. For each chopper.

Mr. BEERS. For each helicopter. To make a Huey II out of it. To make them operational—

Mr. GILMAN. I'm not talking about making the Huey II.

Mr. BEERS. I'm trying to answer that, sir.

With respect to making them operational, it is entirely dependent upon the review that Brian's people have to make to see what the repairs required are. But the general review that we and they conducted earlier was that they were in pretty bad shape.

Mr. GILMAN. What would you estimate—you both are experts. What do you estimate it would cost to make a chopper of that nature operational to send it back down to Colombia?

Mr. BEERS. \$300,000 to \$500,000 a chopper, if they are in as bad a shape as they are supposed to be.

Mr. GILMAN. How much would a new chopper cost?

Mr. BEERS. There isn't a new Huey 1H.

Mr. GILMAN. The similar.

Mr. BEERS. 412 runs on the order of \$6 to \$8 million.

Mr. GILMAN. So there's a substantial savings between the \$6 to \$8 million to the \$300,000 or \$400,000 of making these operational. Can't we explore the possibility of rehabing these choppers and sending them back to help Colombia while we're waiting for Black Hawks to be sent down?

I'm going to ask you to explore that and get back to our committee. Mr. Chairman, with your permission, if you would submit a report to our committee with regard to the possibility of utilizing these choppers for the purposes that we're seeking and that's to upgrade General Seranno's efforts in Colombia.

And I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MICA. Well, I want to thank you and the other members who have participated with us today. I also want to thank our panelists. We called you to testify so that we could work together to solve some of these problems.

There is a level of frustration as a result of not being able to get the equipment to Colombia and the resources so that we could assist the Colombians, bring this situation under control. It certainly is in the vital interests of the United States when we have had last year over 14,000 Americans die from drug-related deaths, and that's just part of the number, and doubling in the number of heroin and overdose deaths.

Mr. Cummings and I have served together for so long, and he tells me that the DEA reports 39,000 heroin addicts in Baltimore, he tells me it's closer to 60,000, which is almost 10 percent of the population, an incredibly staggering amount. And when I go home, I'm met by mothers—I have been met by mothers who have lost a child—I come from an affluent area in central Florida, and I'm accosted by mothers who've lost a son or a daughter, and it's very hard for me to respond. And some of them have taken heroin, maybe this high, pure, deadly heroin one time and die as a result.

So it's affecting everyone, and dramatically the cost is in the billions and billions to this Nation. So we're trying to stop drugs at their source.

In September, we will be doing hearings on the southwest border. We're also anticipating hearings on our drug education program, where we funded \$195 million, and we're going to see how that money has been spent. And we will also be doing hearings on the substance abuse programs, our grants through HHS, our health grants and other drug programs. That will be in September.

I have a request for an additional statement to be entered into the record, this one by myself. Without objection, so ordered.

[The prepared statement of Hon. John L. Mica follows:]

Comments of Congressman John Mica (R., Fla.)
in Honor of Captain Jose A. Santiago, U.S. Army

6 August 1999

As the Chairman of the House Government Reform's Criminal Justice Drug Policy and Human Resources Subcommittee, I want to take this opportunity to recognize the five United States Army Soldiers who died in the line of duty while on an anti narcotics mission in southern Colombia on July 23rd. 1999.

These Soldiers, Captain Jennifer J. Odom, Captain Jose A. Santiago Jr., Chief Warrant Officer Thomas G. Moore, Specialist T. Bruce Cluff and Specialist Ray E. Krueger; embodied all that is good about the United States. They chose to serve their country and they chose to go in harm's way to protect their country. I am inspired by their dedication and I am humbled by their sacrifices.

One of these brave Soldiers, Captain Jose Anthony Santiago Jr., hailed from the Orlando area, just outside my district. He came from an area that is being overwhelmed with drugs from Colombia. He died defending his country from the poison that is destroying our youth. He died in Colombia where he took the battle to the source zone. Captain Santiago was born in New York, attended Osceola High

School in Kissimmee, Oviedo High School and Evans High School in

Orlando. A graduate of the University of Central Florida, he served

faithfully in the United States Army for nearly ten years with a

distinguished record.

Captain Santiago is survived by his wife, Cynthia and daughters

Cristina, 12, and Laura, 6. He is remembered by his friends, family

members and fellow soldiers as an American hero who paid the

ultimate sacrifice to protect his beloved country. The United States is

blessed to have Soldiers such as Captain Santiago and his crewmates

who were lost in Colombia doing their duty.

Mr. MICA. Without objection, we will also, and with the permission of the minority, leave the record open for additional statements and questions for 3 weeks. And I might say that we have substantial additional questions. I don't think we've even scratched the surface of them for both the Department of State and Defense on this issue. So they will be submitted and be made part of the record.

There being no further business to come before the subcommittee on criminal justice, drug policy and human resources, I declare this meeting adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:24 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

[The prepared statement of Hon. Dennis J. Kucinich, Hon. Dana Robrabacher, Hon. Roscoe Bartlett, and additional information submitted for the hearing record follow:]

**Opening Statement for
Dennis J. Kucinich
Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources subcommittee
9am on August 6th 1999**

Mr. Chairman, fellow committee members, and members of the panel, I welcome the committee in holding this important inquiry on the response to the narcotics threat from Columbia, a response that is running at a cost of billions of dollars in aid. This money is not only adversely affecting the farmers who produce the crops, which are essential to their livelihood, but is also proving to be unsuccessful in the eradication of drug supplies. Despite extensive herbicide spraying, coca leaf production has increased by 50% since 1996. It is obvious that the current situation regarding Columbia is not working and a viable alternative must be sought. I look forward to hearing from the views of the panelists on the current situation.

Time Line - Super Hueys (Huey II's) for Colombian National Police (CNP) to fight drugs

- **September 11, 1996** Hearing full HIRC, Overall U.S. Counter Narcotics Policy Towards Columbia.
State Department INL Director, " ... The U.S. Government will commit to deliver as soon as possible, without delay to the Colombian National Police an equal number , 11, of UH 1H Huey's, which will be converted to Huey II's to improve lift range and high altitude performance."
- **October 16, 1996** State Department Letter to Chairman Gilman following September 11, 1996 hearing and September 17th, 1996, Gilman letter to the State Department.
".... 12 UH-1H helicopters for the CNP have been included in the FY 96 Section 506 (a) (2) draw down As you know it is our intention to convert a number of UH-1H helicopters to the so called "Super Huey" configuration for the CNP."
- **June 8, 1998** State Department Letter to Chairman Gilman on aid to Columbia
"The State Department has begun to upgrade the UH-1H helicopters to 'Super Huey' status, and based on the terms of the contract we expect to have 10 fully upgraded helicopters by Spring 1999. In fact we hope to have 5 helicopters by year's end."
- **February 12, 1998** Washington Times State Department Official quoted.
"There have been long standing plans to upgrade Super Hueys. We plan to do 10 helicopters this year (1998)"
- **March 3, 1999** Hearing HIRC Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere "Anti-Drug Efforts in the Americas"
State Department Assistant Secretary INL Rand Beers, on Huey IIs, " the next shipment in May 1999, although I have asked if have asked if we can possibly move that up." ... "Five (more) will be delivered in June 1999, five in December 1999, and six in January 2000."
- **May 7, 1999**, State Department staff fax to HIR committee staff.
"INL expects the next shipment of four Huey IIs to arrive in Columbia in late June or early July, rather than in May as originally projected."
- **June 29, 1999**, HIRC Staff Inquiry of State Department Legislative Affairs
"End of July, 4 Huey IIs to Columbia"
- **July 12th** letter to Chairman Gilman from the State Department
"At this time, we anticipate the contractor will have four more Huey IIS ready for shipment to Colombia in late July."

Net Result

- **July 31st 1999** came and past without any delivery of Huey IIs to the Colombian National Police. We are now at August 6th and we still have only 2 Super Hueys on the Colombian National Police "flight line" to fight drugs at their source.

Statement of Congressman Dana Rohrabacher
American Military Casualties in Colombia
House Government Reform and Oversight Committee
August 6, 1999

Mr. Chairman:

I commend your leadership in conducting this important hearing on the escalating war against narco-terrorism in Colombia. The grim reality of this campaign, which is vital to stability in our hemisphere and ultimately to United States national security, has gone largely unnoticed in America's media. The campaign by the narco-terrorists to control Colombia has caused great suffering to the people of Colombia and has resulted in hundreds of deaths of that country's counter-drug forces. That growing conflict was brought home to America's heartland last week with the recovery in the jungles of Colombia of the bodies of five U.S. service members who perished in the crash of an aircraft of the U.S. Army's 204th Military Intelligence Battalion. They honorably gave their lives in service to our country.

Compounding this tragedy, nobody from the White House was at Dover Air Force Base to honor the return of the soldiers' bodies when they were returned from Colombia. Robert Novak reports that the family of one of the deceased soldiers, Captain Jennifer Odom, was frustrated that Defense Department did not return their phone calls in a timely manner during the period when the airplane was missing. There has been no official comment from the White House to express sorrow or condolence to the families. This lack of compassion underscores the Clinton administration's woefully inadequate counter-drug policy, whether it be to address domestic consumption or to provide assistance in the life and death military struggle in source countries.

Our nation owes a debt of gratitude to all of our brave military men and women, Drug Enforcement Agency agents and Customs agents who are on the front line of this vicious narco-terror war. Although they are not eligible for awards of the Purple Heart due to the undeclared war, we owe a special debt of gratitude to those who perished in the RC-7 aircraft on July 23, 1999: Captain Jennifer Odom, Captain Jose A. Santiago, Chief Warrant Officer Thomas G. Moore, Specialist Bruce Cluff and Specialist Ray E. Krueger. May they rest in peace and may we in the Congress be worthy of their ultimate sacrifice by our policy decisions.

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN
ROSCOE BARTLETT (R, Md.)

There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the United States is waging an international war on drugs. The stark reality came home to us last week when the bodies of five heroic SOLDIERS were recovered in the mountains of Colombia.

When the United States sends it's sons and daughters forward to defend our national interests ... it is done with full resolve and the determination to achieve VICTORY .

VICTORY is the ONLY objective worthy of the efforts of Our men and women in uniform.

When they fall in the line of duty, they are to be recognized for their actions. This sadly, has not been the case of the "FORGOTTEN FIVE" of the U.S. Army's 204th. Military Intelligence Battalion who gave their lives in the service of their country in our war on drugs.

I ask all the members of this Committee to examine the issue of "The Narcotics Threat from Colombia" in this hearing today. It is far too important to wait for the current Administration to take action .

The efforts of those terribly decent young SOLDIERS are too important to just push aside, as it appears it has been done now. The continuing efforts of our Servicemen and women and brave D.E.A. agents in Colombia cannot be abandoned. As a nation that sent the likes of Captain Jennifer Odom, Captain Jose A. Santiago, Chief Warrant Officer Thomas G. Moore, Specialist Bruce Cluff and Specialist Ray E. Krueger into harm's way... we can do no less.

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 3, 1999

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

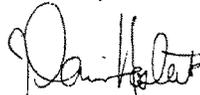
Dear Mr. President:

We are deeply concerned by the rapidly deteriorating political, economic, and security situation in Colombia. The expansion of the FARC insurgency and the erosion of the Colombian economy are now directly threatening democracy in Colombia, a development which, if unchecked, will have severe implications for the United States of America. We believe that now is the time for the Administration to reach out to the Congress and the American people to develop a comprehensive plan to respond to this emergency situation in this strategically important democracy located just hours from our borders.

We would like to hear from you and your senior advisors now on immediate steps that can be taken to regain a secure and stable environment in Colombia's cities and countryside, restore investor confidence in the economy both in Colombia and internationally, and replenish our constrained efforts to eliminate Colombia's huge cocaine and heroin production zones.

Measures that merit urgent and serious consideration by both of our branches of government include the following: 1) enhancement of regional counterdrug intelligence programs and capabilities; 2) significant upgrades in training and equipment for Colombia's police and military counterdrug operations; 3) intensification of heroin and cocaine eradication efforts, including the early deployment of mycoherbicides in FARC and ELN controlled zones; 4) enhancements to the Colombian component of the regional airbridge interdiction program; 5) acquisition of at least one secure airfield in or near Colombia to replace the loss of Howard Air Force Base in Panama.

As we are sure you recognize, the collapse of democracy in Colombia and the emergence of a narco-state south of our border would be an extremely serious threat to our national security. We look forward to your response.



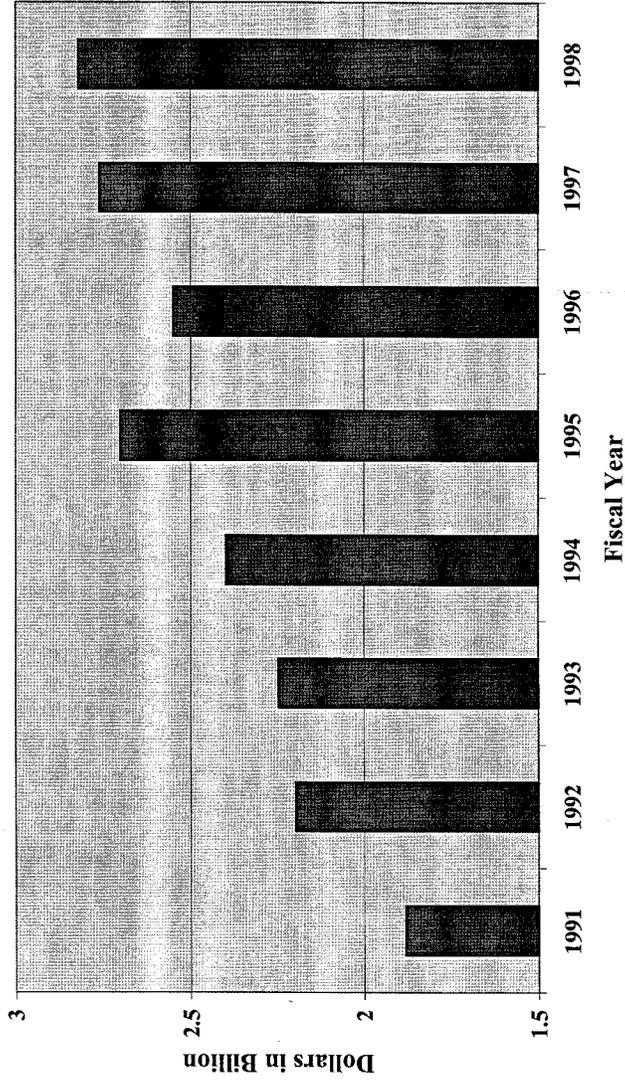
J. Dennis Hastert

Sincerely,



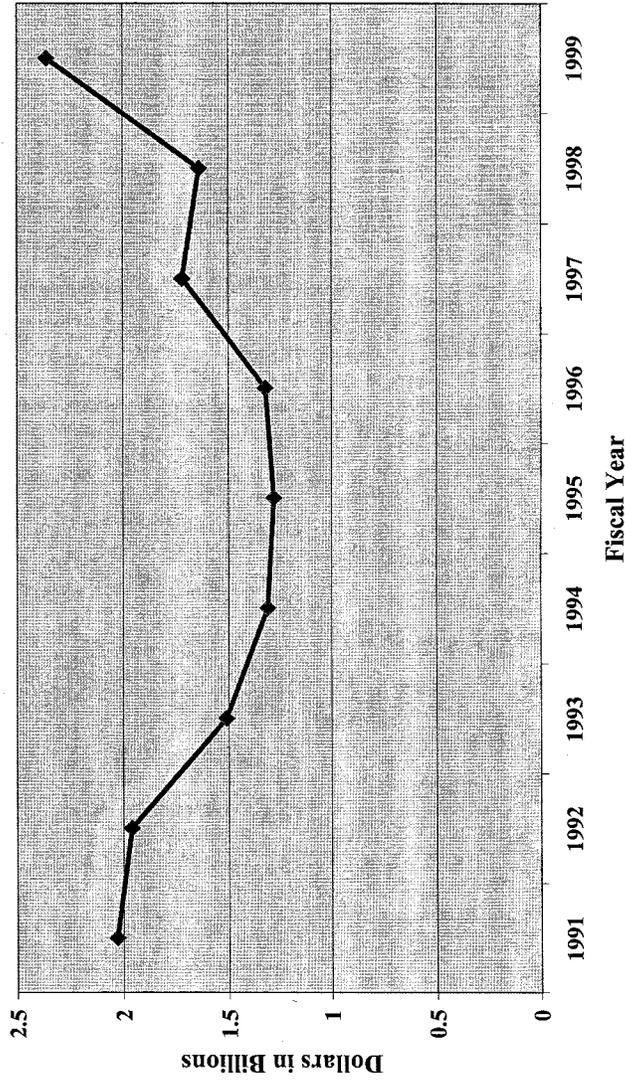
Trent Lott

FEDERAL DRUG SPENDING: Treatment



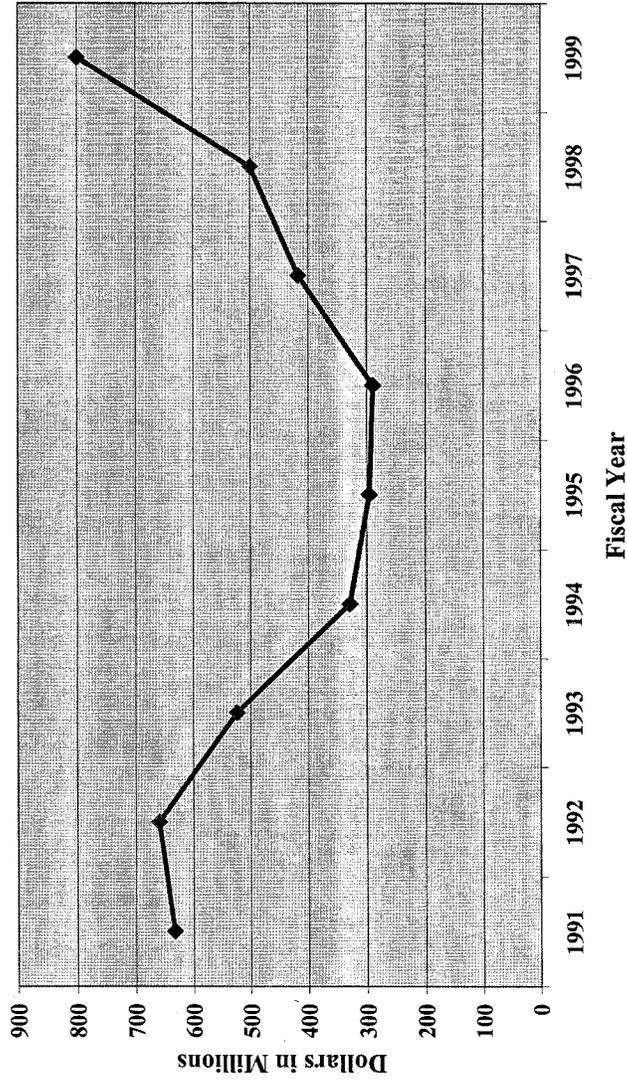
Fiscal Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Treatment	1.88	2.2	2.25	2.4	2.7	2.55	2.76	2.82	3.02

FEDERAL DRUG SPENDING: Interdiction



Fiscal Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Interdiction	2.03	1.96	1.51	1.28	1.31	1.32	1.72	1.64	2.36

FEDERAL DRUG SPENDING: International



Fiscal Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
International	633	660	523	329	329	290	417	500	800

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1102
August 20, 1999

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THE HONORABLE JOHN L. MICA, CHAIR
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY & HUMAN RESOURCES
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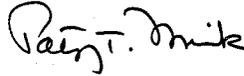
Dear Mr. Chairman:

Carlos Salinas, Advocacy Director of Latin America and the Caribbean Amnesty
International USA, sent the enclosed questions to my office.

Please include this letter in the official record of the Government Reform Subcommittee
on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources hearing entitled "The Narcotics
Threat from Colombia," held on August 6, 1999.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Very truly yours,



PATSY T. MINK
Member of Congress



12 August 1999

600 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, 5th Floor, Washington, DC 20003
 Phone (202) 544-0200 • Fax (202) 545-7142
 www.amnestyusa.org

Via facsimile

COPY

Dear Congresswoman Mink,

I would like to ask you to raise a few questions for the record of the August 6 hearing on Colombia by the Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources. Chairman Mica stated that he would keep the record open for three weeks, for documents and questions.

As the policy on Colombia is centered on combating the scourge of narco-trafficking, it is important that the components of this problem be examined. The hearing focused a great deal on the involvement of the armed opposition groups in this illegal and harmful business. Yet the Drug Enforcement Administration in its presentation stated that paramilitary groups were also involved in the drug trade. However there was scant mention or discussion of what should be done about them! This is troubling since the paramilitary groups are allies of the Colombian security forces. Yet the policy discussion implies that these security forces would receive a substantial increase in US aid!

So I hope you can ask the following questions for the record of the DEA:

1. Which paramilitary groups are involved in the drug trade?
2. What is the extent of involvement of each of these paramilitary groups in the drug trade?
3. How much money do each of the paramilitary groups earn from the drug trade?
4. What is the Colombian Army doing to combat the paramilitary groups?
5. Have there been any armed confrontations between the Colombian Army and the paramilitary groups in the past two years, and if so, when and where?

Our main interest in the paramilitary groups stems from the fact that these groups are responsible for the overwhelming number of atrocities in this dirty Colombian war. And yet they carry out their atrocities unimpeded by the Colombian security forces. Since the policy direction is to increase the capacity of the Colombian state to confront the allies of the narco-traffickers, it is puzzling why no one mentions the fact that the key ally of the Colombian security forces is also involved in the drug trade.

To help the Colombian Army is to help the paramilitaries. We hope you can help achieve clarity on the part of the Administration about this central fact.

Sincerely,

Carlos M. Salinas
 Advocacy Director
 Latin America and the Caribbean

Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working impartially for the release of all prisoners of conscience. Its aid cannot be for political prisoners and on card to torture and executions. It is funded by donations from its members and supporters throughout the world.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
 William J. Schabas