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SECURITY AFFAIRS

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I-02/003347-WH

DepSec Action _____

FOR: SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

FROM: Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs
(Mr. Peter W. Rodman, (b)(6))

MAR 13 2002

SUBJECT: HILL REACTIONS TO OUR COLOMBIA POLICY;
WHERE STATE IS HEADED

(S) During your phone call with President Pastrana you said that you wondered what the Hill was thinking with regard to Colombia.

(S) Many in Congress—Republicans and Democrats alike—are sharply critical of the Administration's response to the breakdown of Colombia's peace process.

- There appears to be an opportunity to build bipartisan support for a new Colombia policy. I agree with Legislative Affairs, however, that this will require a concerted effort by senior DoD officials to persuade remaining skeptics on the Hill.
 - The House of Representatives passed H.R. 358 by unanimous consent, urging the President to propose a policy framed in terms of supporting Colombian democracy, and adding counterterrorism as an explicit goal of U.S. policy. (TAB A).
 - This represents the first formal acknowledgement by either house that the threat to Colombia now goes beyond drugs, and that U.S. policy should reflect this. A similar Senate resolution is expected this week.
- Though some important skeptics (e.g., Rep. Skelton) still fear expansion of the US role, the prevailing view on the Hill is that Pastrana's decision to end the FARC safehaven represents a bold move against terrorists who menace Colombians and Americans alike. The Administration's decision to operate within existing authorities and retain a counternarcotics-oriented policy is viewed as weak and out of step with counter-terrorism imperatives.

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SECDEF CONTROL#

X00871 /02

Classified by: Roger Pardo-Maurer, DASD-WHA
Reasons: 1.5(b) and (d)
Declassify on: 5 March 2011



MAR 13 2002 /1838

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- Key staffers (e.g. for Speaker Hastert and Sen. Leahy) want a more forthcoming response to Pastrana's request for expanded US support.
- The major concerns of the skeptics have to do with:
 - The Colombian government's commitment to providing for its own security
 - Human rights
 - Not sending U.S. troops into combat in Colombia.

(S)

(b)(1)

(b)(1), 1.4(d)

COORDINATION: At TAB C

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TAB A

MAR 06 2002

(Original Signature of Member)

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. _____

Expressing support for the democratically elected Government of Colombia and its efforts to counter threats from United States-designated foreign terrorist organizations.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. HYDE (for himself and Mr. LANTOS) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the democratically elected Government of Colombia and its efforts to counter threats from United States-designated foreign terrorist organizations.

Whereas the democratically elected Government of Colombia, led by President Andres Pastrana, is the legitimate authority in the oldest representative democracy in South America;

Whereas the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury, is re-



quired to designate as foreign terrorist organizations those groups whose activities threaten the security of United States nationals or the national security interests of the United States pursuant to section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act;

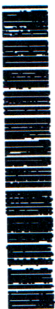
Whereas the Secretary of State has designated three Colombian terrorist groups as foreign terrorist organizations, including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), and the National Liberation Army (ELN);

Whereas all three United States-designated foreign terrorist organizations regularly engage in criminal acts, including murder, kidnapping, and extortion perpetrated against Colombian civilians, government officials, security forces, and against foreign nationals, including United States citizens;

Whereas the FARC is holding five Colombian legislators, a presidential candidate, and Colombian police and army officers and soldiers as hostages and has recently escalated bombings against civilian targets, including a foiled attempt to destroy the city of Bogota's principal water reservoir;

Whereas, according to the Colombian Government, the FARC has received training in terrorist techniques and technology from foreign nationals;

Whereas, since 1992, United States-designated foreign terrorist organizations in Colombia have committed serious crimes against United States citizens, kidnapping more than 50 Americans and murdering at least ten Americans;



Whereas the Drug Enforcement Administration believes that members of the FARC and the AUC directly engage in narcotics trafficking;

Whereas individual members of Colombia's security forces have collaborated with illegal paramilitary organizations by, inter alia, in some instances allowing such organizations to pass through roadblocks, sharing tactical information with such organizations, and providing such organizations with supplies and ammunition;

Whereas while the Colombian Government has made progress in its efforts to combat and capture members of illegal paramilitary organizations and taken positive steps to break links between individual members of the security forces and such organizations, further steps by the Colombian Government are warranted;

Whereas in 1998 Colombian President Andres Pastrana began exhaustive efforts to negotiate a peace agreement with the FARC and implemented extraordinary confidence-building measures to advance these negotiations, including establishing a 16,000-square-mile safe haven for the FARC;

Whereas the Government of Colombia has also undertaken substantial efforts to negotiate a peace agreement with the ELN;

Whereas the United States has consistently supported the Government of Colombia's protracted efforts to negotiate a peace agreement with the FARC and supports the Government of Colombia in its continuing efforts to reach a negotiated agreement with the ELN;

Whereas the United States would welcome a negotiated, political solution to end the violence in Colombia;



Whereas, after the FARC hijacked a commercial airplane and took Colombian Senator Jorge Eduardo Gechem Turbay as a hostage into the government-created safe haven, President Pastrana ended his government's sponsorship of the peace negotiations with the FARC and ordered Colombia's security forces to re-establish legitimate governmental control in the safe haven;

Whereas President Pastrana has received strong expressions of support from foreign governments and international organizations for his decision to end the peace talks and dissolve the FARC's safe haven; and

Whereas the Government of Colombia's negotiations with the ELN are continuing despite the end of the negotiations with the FARC: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved, That—*

2 (1) the House of Representatives—

3 (A) expresses its support for the democrat-
4 ically elected Government of Colombia and the
5 Colombian people as they strive to protect their
6 democracy from terrorism and the scourge of il-
7 licit narcotics; and

8 (B) deplores the continuing criminal ter-
9 rorist acts of murder, abduction, and extortion
10 carried out by all United States-designated for-
11 eign terrorist organizations in Colombia against
12 United States citizens, the civilian population of
13 Colombia, and Colombian authorities; and

1 (2) it is the sense of the House of Representa-
2 tives that the President, without undue delay, should
3 transmit to Congress for its consideration proposed
4 legislation, consistent with United States law regard-
5 ing the protection of human rights, to assist the
6 Government of Colombia protect its democracy from
7 United States-designated foreign terrorist organiza-
8 tions and the scourge of illicit narcotics; and

9 (3) it is the sense of the House of Representa-
10 tives that the Secretary of State should designate a
11 high-ranking official to coordinate all United States
12 assistance to the Government of Colombia to ensure
13 clarity of United States policy and the effective de-
14 livery of United States support.



TAB B

(b)(1),1.4(d)

(b)(1),1.4(d)

(b)(1).1.4(d)

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(b)(1), 1.4(d)

(b)(1).1.4(d)

March 11, 2002

Memorandum for The Honorable Powell Moore, ASD/Legislative Affairs

Subject: SecDef inquiry on Hill views towards Colombia Policy

The 'Sense of Congress' towards the Administration's policy in Colombia is an extremely complex subject that cuts across partisan and ideological boundaries. While there is a growing amount of interest on the issue, I believe it would be a mistake to assume a broad consensus until the policy is further debated on the Hill. Mr. Pardo-Maurer, the DASD for Western Hemisphere Affairs, and Mr. Hollis, the DASD for Counternarcotics, have been actively encouraging Members and committee staff to debate the issue.

I believe most Members of Congress fall into one (or more) of these categories:

- **The "We're Missing an Opportunity" faction.** Includes Rep Goss (R-FL), Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and Rep Ballenger (R-NC), Chairman of the House International Relations Committee's subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere. This group is growing given the fact that nobody wants to look 'soft on terrorism' in an election year. Members of this faction strongly believe that the Administration's declared war against terrorism should absolutely target what they perceive as a significant threat "in our own back yard". The Chairman of the HIRC, Rep Hyde (R-IL), championed the House Resolution that passed by unanimous consent on March 6, 2002 and which called for an expanded policy towards Colombian terrorist organizations. Members of this bipartisan faction would likely support a change in policy.
 - **The 'Baby with the Bath Water' faction.** A subset of the category immediately above, it includes the Speaker of the House, Rep Hastert (R-IL), who was a major player in setting up the current counterdrug policy "Plan Colombia". It also includes Rep Burton (R-IN), Chairman of the House Government Reform Committee, and Rep Gilman (R-NY). This group believes that there is a critical opportunity right now to assist the Colombian Government's counterterrorism efforts, but that it should not come at the expense of the counterdrug program. They believe that both missions are extremely important. The Speaker controls the Counterdrug Task Force whose membership includes 48 Members from both sides of the aisle and from all of the House committees; his position will be key. Members of this bipartisan faction will be the primary 'swing vote' in the debate. They will be very open to a Hill debate, but will move cautiously.
- **The 'Human Rights' faction.** Includes Sen Leahy (D-VT), Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and author of the existing law requiring specific human rights vetting as a precursor to security assistance. Sen Leahy, who personally believes the current counterdrug strategy does not work, speaks for

many Members who are open to a shift in the Colombia policy as long as any assistance remains directly tied to demonstrated improvements in Human Rights by the Colombian Government. At present, they are dissatisfied with the track record in Colombia and would not support increased assistance until they are given tangible evidence of progress. Primarily Democrats, this faction can be further divided into those that have an open mind (if human rights concerns are addressed) and those that firmly believe we should not expand our policy.

- **The "Status Quo" faction.** A subset of the "Human Rights" category above, this group include Sen Kennedy (D-MA) and others who are so unhappy with the Colombian Government's human rights efforts that they are not really open to even a dialogue on additional support to that government.
- **The 'Colombian commitment' faction.** Includes Rep Skelton (D-MS), the Ranking Member on the House Armed Services Committee, Rep Taylor (D-MS), Rep Abercrombie (D-HI), and other Members on both sides of the aisle that believe any U.S. assistance should be directly tied to the perceived level of commitment on the part of the Colombian Government. They believe that the Colombians are 'playing' the U.S. Government as a 'cash cow', and that the Colombian Government could do a lot more to address their problem. Members of this faction tend to view the Colombian's terrorist problem as internal, with minimal effect on U.S. national security. At present, this fiscally conservative faction is dissatisfied with the track record in Colombia and would likely not support increased assistance until they see tangible evidence of progress.
- **The 'Complete Disengagement' faction.** A small group that is probably getting smaller every day. A growing number of Congressional Members do not believe the primarily counterdrug strategy in Colombia is producing tangible results, and the initially broad support for the existing program is beginning to wane. Most believe that the drug problem is the only facet of Colombia issue affecting the U.S. and would most likely support a total withdrawal of support instead of increasing military assistance.
- **The "No Position" faction.** Frankly, a disproportionate number of Members have no articulated position, pro or con, on the issue.

In conclusion, I believe there is an opportunity to gain Congressional support for a change in policy towards Colombia. However, this will require the concerted efforts of senior Department officials to convince Hill skeptics that the situation demands a more aggressive military strategy. Any position that could possibly result in a U.S. military combat force in Colombia will be "dead on arrival", however increased intelligence sharing, training and equipment transfers might be an achievable goal.