

### Highlights

#### Latin America

#### Andean Countries: Polls Show Drugs a Priority Issue (C NF)

Recent opinion polls in Andean countries indicate that, while few regard drugs as the most serious issue their governments face, most view it as an important problem. Responses to USIA-sponsored surveys in Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru late last year show that the economic situation is regarded as the worst problem in all countries except Colombia, where terrorism and violence overshadow economic concerns. Drugs and drug addiction were fifth on the list of most frequently mentioned problems in Bolivia and Colombia, and sixth in Ecuador and Peru in 1992.

Ninety percent or more of those polled believe that drug trafficking is a "very serious" problem, although often not listed as the country's top problem. A majority have heard or read a great deal about drug use and trafficking and believe that illegal drugs are readily available and usage is common. When asked about specific drug issues, Peruvians and Bolivians responded that coca production was the worst drug problem, while Colombians and Ecuadorians rated consumption as the primary concern. Large majorities in all countries considered drug trafficking (88 to 93 percent) and production (89 to 94 percent) to be serious; most Ecuadorians said transshipment was also a serious problem.

#### Highest Concerns: Economic Problems and Terrorism

Percent

Q. (Open-end) What would you say is the worst problem facing our country today?

	Bolivia		Colombia		Ecuador		Peru	
	1991	1992	1991	1992	1991	1992	1991	1992
Total*	102	100	98	101	100	100	100	101
Terrorism, violence, insurgencies	..b	..b	31	37	1	..b	19	22
Economic situation, poverty, unemployment	54	57	40	24	70	71	58	59
Drugs, drug addiction	12	7	10	8	3	2	3	1
Political crisis, bad government	6	13	4	9	10	9	5	4
Narcotrafficking, power of the cartels	6	..b	7	..b	..b	..b	3	..b
Government corruption	4	10	2	7	1	..b	2	3
Juvenile delinquency	1	..b	..b	1	5	..b	1	1
Social situation, immorality	1	..b	3	..b	1	8	3	..b
Education	..b	..b	..b	1	1	6	2	1
Lack of social services	..b	..b	..b	..b	4	6	..b	..b
Don't know/no response	8	8	..b	1	1	3	..b	5
Other	10	5	1	13	3	1	4	5

\* Due to rounding components may not add to 100 percent.  
 b Negligible.

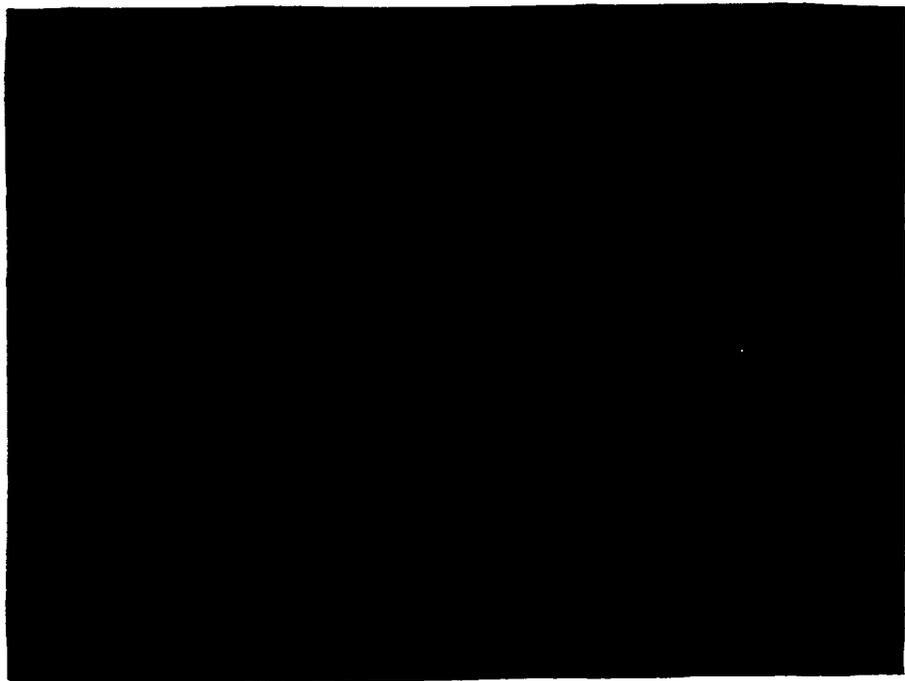
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**Jet Aircraft Smuggling Cocaine in Latin America** [REDACTED]

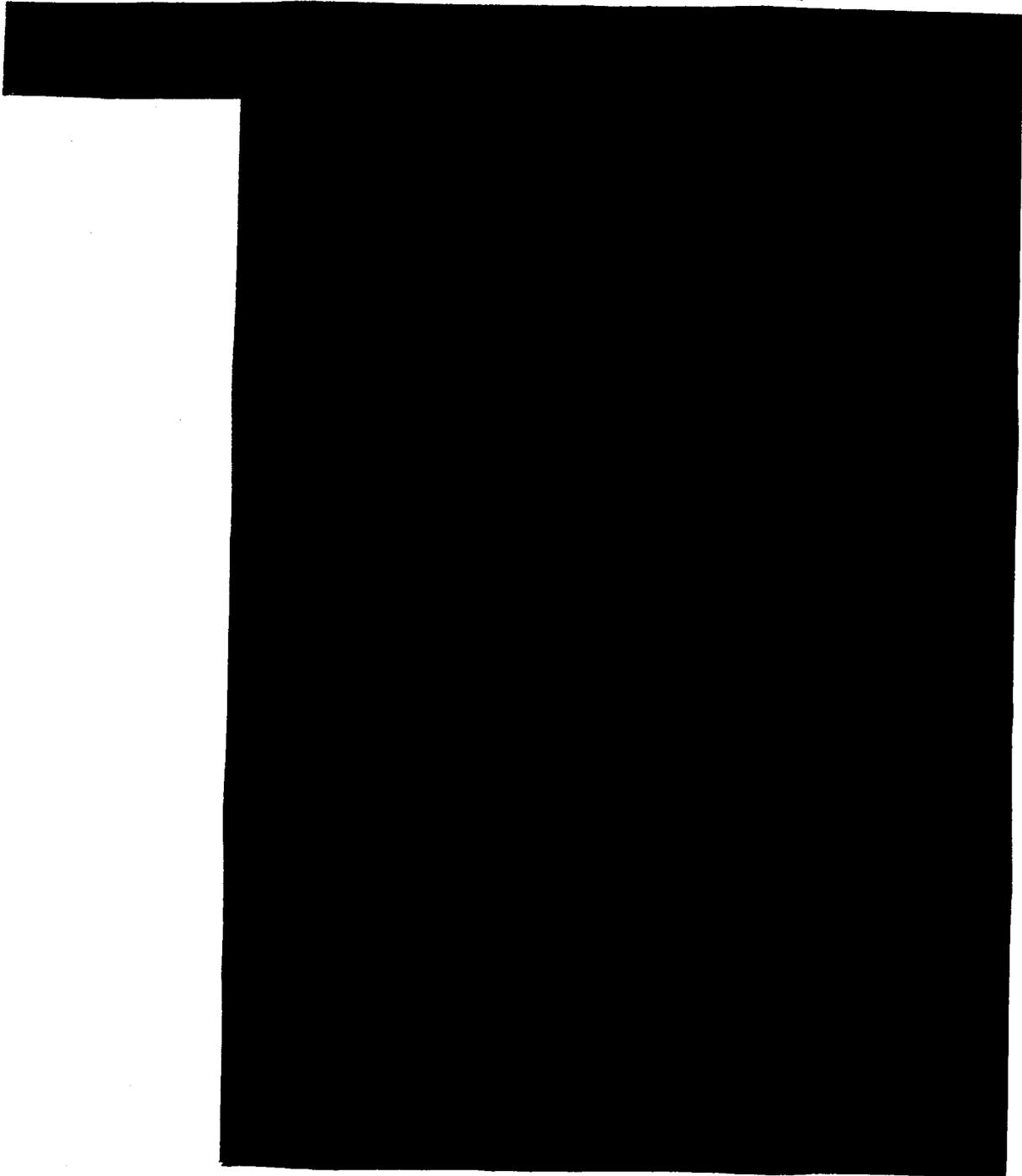
Cocaine traffickers are increasingly turning to small jet aircraft—with greater range and payload capabilities—to replace their propeller-driven aircraft lost to crashes and seizures. According to DEA seizure records, the jets most popular with traffickers are small corporate-style aircraft, including the US Learjet, Cessna Citation, and Sabliner; the Israeli Westwind; and the French Dassault Falcon. In addition, trafficker-owned commercial air cargo companies have acquired eight Boeing 727-100s and three Russian AN-74s, and one organization is seeking to purchase a DC-8, according to DEA. [REDACTED]

Jets are attractive because they allow traffickers—who might be aware of detection and monitoring capabilities—to attempt to confuse radar sorting criteria by moving along traditional intercontinental commercial air corridors. General aviation jets also provide traffickers with greater speed, control, and capacity for bulky cash repatriation, and their significant purchase cost can be part of the money-laundering process. On the other hand, their use also raises opportunities for intelligence collection and interdiction by US law enforcement agencies. Because the maintenance facilities for jet aircraft are mostly in the United States and because most jets can be flown only to longer, wider, and better-maintained runways, collection and interdiction assets can be concentrated against key airports. [REDACTED]

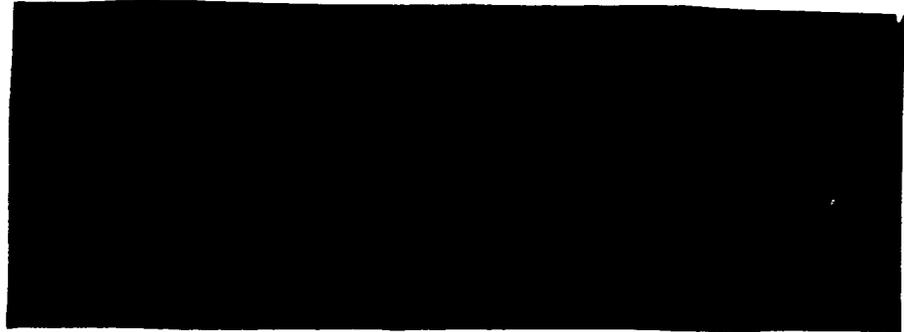


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**Peru: Counternarcotics Forces Conduct Successful Operations**

Aided by the US Drug Enforcement Administration, on 23 March Peruvian Air Force and National Police units raided a sophisticated ether recycling laboratory capable of producing 800 kilograms of finished cocaine daily and destroyed an associated airstrip. The laboratory and the airstrip were located in northeastern Peru near the Colombian and Brazilian borders and reportedly belonged to well-known Colombian trafficker Evaristo Porras Ardilla, who was arrested in Colombia earlier in March. On 25 March customs officials at the international airport in Lima discovered approximately 250 kilograms of high-purity cocaine—one of the largest seizures of cocaine HCl in Peru ever. Peruvian customs had recently intensified its review of export products normally only spot checked and uncovered the drugs in a shipment of shirts destined for New York.

The Peruvian border region with Colombia and Brazil has long been associated with drug transport and cocaine production.

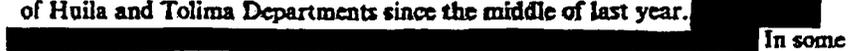


The seizure also underscores Peru's increasing role in producing finished cocaine. This is exemplified by a jump in exports from the United States to Peru of precursor chemicals needed to produce cocaine HCl—about 1,500 percent since 1990.



**Colombia: Poppy Crop Knocked Down, But Not Out**

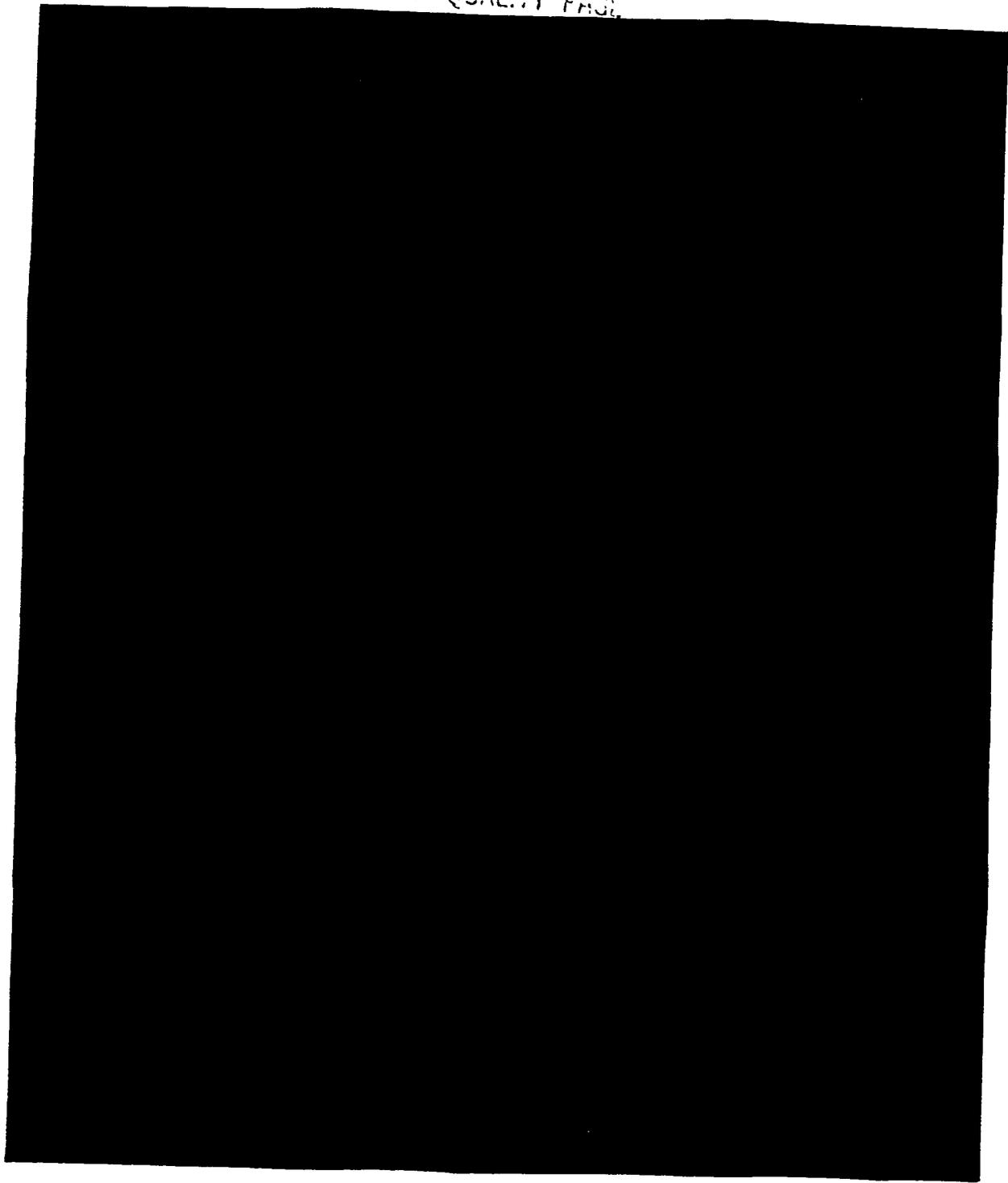
Colombia's year-old aerial eradication effort is limiting opium cultivation in the "traditional" high density areas, but cultivation is spreading to areas not yet targeted by the spray program. Colombian National Police (CNP) reconnaissance flights in January indicate poppy cultivation had dropped between 40 and 75 percent in the highest density growing areas of Huila and Tolima Departments since the middle of last year.



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[REDACTED] 80 to 90

percent of the indigenous growers in Cauca have abided by their agreement with Bogota to eradicate their poppyfields. Local police units are increasing eradication operations throughout Colombia in Antioquia, Boyaca, Cundinamarca, Guajira, and Narino Departments. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Europe

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]