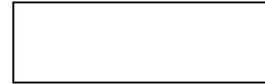




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CIA/DE --- NR 86-003 ---

Narcotics Review



June 1986

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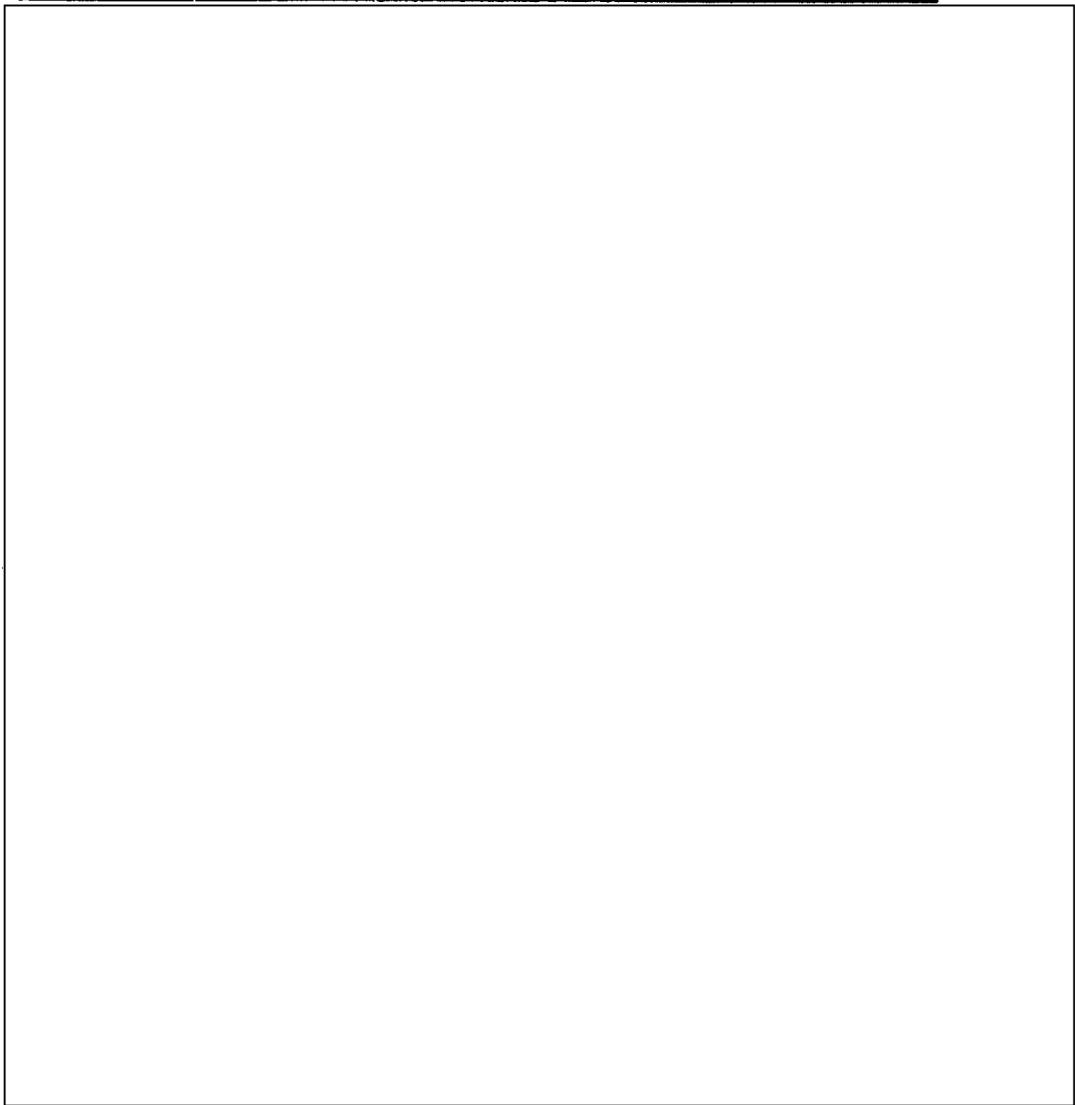
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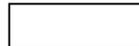


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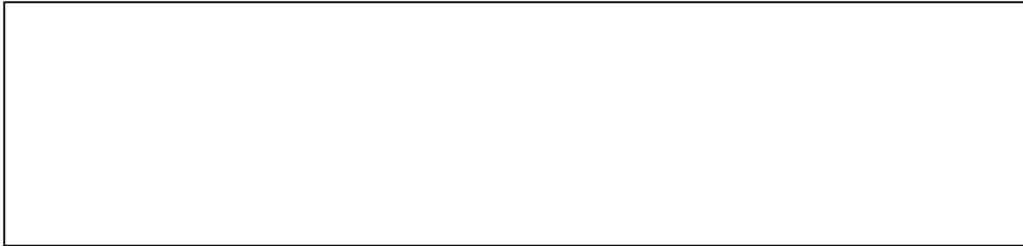
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Worldwide Narcotics Highlights
A summary of key developments from 1 April 1986 to 1 June 1986.



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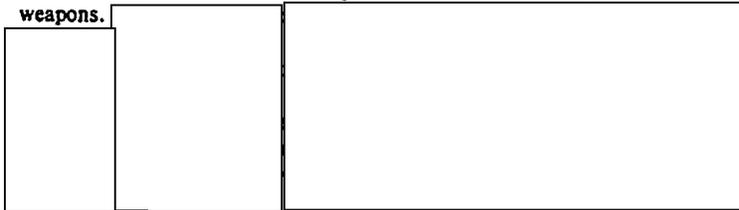
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Worldwide Narcotics Highlights

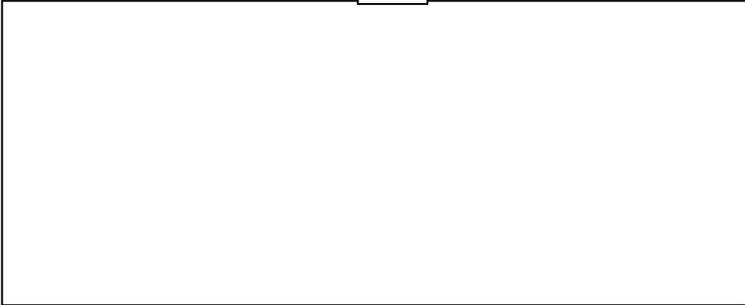
South America

Several recent clashes between antinarcotics forces and insurgents in *Colombia's* southeast jungles probably will cause Bogota to curtail its recently intensified drive against large cocaine refining centers located in this area. During May, special antinarcotics units of the National Police had two skirmishes with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the country's largest insurgent group, and one with forces suspected of belonging to the smaller People's Liberation Army. In the most serious attack, four police agents were killed when their patrol—returning from a successful cocaine laboratory raid nearby—was ambushed by 50 to 60 FARC troops armed with rockets and automatic weapons.

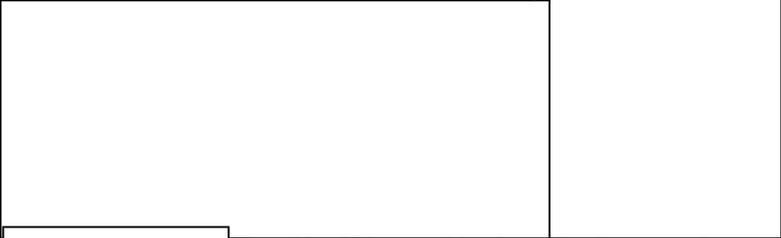


observers who made low-level flights over much of northern *Colombia* at the start of the marijuana growing season in April report that cultivation in the northeastern mountains—once *Colombia's* leading marijuana-producing area—appears to be significantly lower than in previous years. Although it was too early in the growing season to estimate actual cultivation, the observers found that in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and in the nearby Serrania de Perija Mountains, many former marijuana fields were abandoned or planted with other crops. The small number of seedbeds observed was a further indication that cultivation is not as widespread as last year. The observations tend to confirm reports from some growers that repeated aerial spraying had discouraged them from planting marijuana. Cultivation is apparently emerging in other areas to offset this decline. Over the past several years, sources have indicated that cultivation was expanding in the Golfo de Uraba area as more crops in the mountains were destroyed. observers found hundreds of newly cleared fields—resembling the pattern of marijuana cultivation in the northeast—scattered around the Gulf. There have been reports of new marijuana cultivation in other areas as well.

Colombia's newly elected President Virgilio Barco has said little about the narcotics problem, but the US Embassy in Bogota expects that he will continue counternarcotics efforts begun by President Betancur when he assumes office in August. As Ambassador to the United States in 1979, Barco signed the bilateral extradition treaty with Washington. According to Embassy reports, Barco privately told US officials that drug-related corruption has a corrosive effect on Colombian society and that he wants to cooperate with Washington in criminal investigations and reform of Colombia's cumbersome and corrupt judicial system. Barco has not stated, however, what specific antidrug actions he plans to take, especially concerning the politically sensitive and physically dangerous problems of extending marijuana eradication into areas where cultivation is expanding or attacking the major cocaine processing centers located in insurgent-controlled areas. Narcotics never became an important issue during the presidential campaign, and Barco may wait until he has addressed the country's pressing security and economic problems before developing a comprehensive drug control strategy. [redacted]



Peru's coca eradication program suffered a setback in April when President Garcia decided to suspend an important operation in the Upper Huallaga Valley—one of the country's leading coca-growing areas—rather than use force to quell an antinarcotics demonstration. [redacted]



[redacted] The odds of Lima reaching its eradication target of

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6,000 hectares by the end of the year, however, are waning. [redacted]

[redacted]
the Minister of Interior has warned that future operations may have to be slowed or canceled if eradication teams cannot be protected. [redacted]



The Mexican Government reacted recently to increasing lawlessness in Sinaloa State and to opposition charges of drug-related corruption. Acting on the orders of President de la Madrid, a combined force of about 1,300 federal and state police and military personnel conducted searches throughout Sinaloa for illegal weapons and stolen vehicles. According to Mexican press reports, Institutional Revolutionary Party leaders forced three senior state officials to resign just prior to the operation, apparently because of alleged involvement with drug traffickers. Sinaloa is one of Mexico's most important opium refining and growing regions and has the highest crime rate in the country. [redacted]