Plan Colombia: A Case for Political Warfare to Defeat Transnational Criminal Organizations in the Gray Zone

A Monograph

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Transnational criminal organizations pose a threat to US national security as well as the security of the global commons. Their activities lead to the corruption of government actors, erosion of human security, and the disruption of globalization. Transnational criminal organizations are able to operate with impunity because their actions reside in what is deemed the gray zone; the empty space between peace and war. Unfortunately, state institutions have historically attempted to combat transnational criminal organizations with an overtly militarized strategy which has typically exacerbated the situation, thereby allowing these organizations to prosper. Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, demonstrates that a measured military response guided by the tenets of Political Warfare can defeat transnational criminal organizations in the gray zone. US support to Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, highlights that a coherent Political Warfare strategy allows all the instruments of national power to compete with, and eventually defeat, transnational criminal organizations in the continuum of conflict, resident within the gray zone.

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Abstract

Plan Colombia: A Case for Political Warfare to Defeat Transnational Criminal Organizations in the Gray Zone, by MAJ Kyle M. Spade, US Army, 75 pages.

Transnational criminal organizations pose a threat to US national security as well as the security of the global commons. Their activities lead to the corruption of government actors, erosion of human security, and the disruption of globalization. Transnational criminal organizations are able to operate with impunity because their actions reside in what is deemed the gray zone; the empty space between peace and war. Unfortunately, state institutions have historically attempted to combat transnational criminal organizations with an overtly militarized strategy which has typically exacerbated the situation, thereby allowing these organizations to prosper. Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, demonstrates that a measured military response guided by the tenets of Political Warfare can defeat transnational criminal organizations in the gray zone. US support to Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, highlights that a coherent Political Warfare strategy allows all the instruments of national power to compete with, and eventually defeat, transnational criminal organizations in the continuum of conflict, resident within the gray zone.

Acknowledgments

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Acronyms

AUC	United Self Defense Groups of Colombia
CD	Counterdrug
CNP	Colombian National Police
COLMIL	Colombian Military
DSDP	Democratic Security and Defense Policy
ELN	*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*
FARC	*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*
GOC	Government of Colombia
SOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
SOUTHCOM	United States Southern Command
TCOs	Transnational Criminal Organizations
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
US	United States
USASOC	United States Army Special Operations Command
USG	United States Government

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Introduction

Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) poses a significant threat to the United States' (US) national security and the global commons as a whole. They pursue power and money by infiltrating zones of insecurity in nation states that do not possess the ability to interdict their movements or actions. In 2015, General John F. Kelley, Commander, US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) testified in front of the US Senate Arms Services Committee and noted that TCOs continue to undermine the autonomy of the nations within SOUTHCOM's area of responsibility, which has a direct impact on US national security.[1] He further remarked that TCOs pose a direct threat to US national security as they are cooperating "wittingly, or even unwittingly" with terrorist organizations intent on infiltrating the US through the southern border.[2] Their astronomical monetary gains from illegal activities afford TCOs the ability to influence nation states through covert and overt coercion, thereby creating instability for legitimate political institutions and globalization.[3]

Through a web of organizations, TCOs circumvent law enforcement agencies while participating in an array of illegal activities focused on securing substantial profits. Leveraging coercion and corruption practices, TCOs have flourished in environments prone to human

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[1] United States Southern Command, "Area of Responsibility," *United States Southern Command*, accessed February 29, 2016, http://www.southcom.mil/aboutus/Pages/Area-of-Responsibility.aspx. The SOUTHCOM web page defines their area of responsibility as encompassing the land mass in Latin America south of Mexico. Furthermore, they are responsible for "the waters adjacent to Central and South America" as well as the Caribbean Sea.

[2] John F. Kelley, "Posture Statement of General John F. Kelly, United States Marine Corps Commander, United States Southern Command Before The 114th Congress Senate Armed Services Committee" (Washington, DC: March 12, 2015), 5, accessed October 23, 2015, http://www.southcom.mil/newsroom/Pages/2015-Posture-Statement-to-Congress-.aspx.

[3] National Security Council, *Strategy to Combat Transnational Criminal Organizations: Addressing Converging Threats to National Security* (Washington, DC: National Security Council 2011), 5, accessed November 1, 2015, https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/2011-strategy-combat-transnational-organized-crime.pdf.

security issues.[4] For decades, the United States Government's (USG) primary concern regarding TCOs has focused on narco-trafficking in the hopes that targeting the traffickers and producers would, in turn, curb drug use in the US.[5] Recently, however, the USG has observed that TCOs not only operate in the illegal drug trade but have also diversified their activities to maximize profits while capitalizing on their ability to create instability in regions where they operate with impunity. There exists a nexus among illicit trafficking, corruption, and organized crime which feeds on the proliferation of fragile states, insurgency, and terrorism.[6] The nexus creates an environment ripe for increasingly disenfranchised populations to subvert governments and delegitimize vulnerable states.

In 2011, the estimated profits for illicit trafficking was $650 billion, which is a larger sum than the national Gross Domestic Product in all but twenty nations in the world.[7] The illicit trafficking industry weaves its way through the global commons and provides these organizations with the money and power to disrupt the social, economic and security fabrics of the world.[8]

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[4] World Economic Forum, *Global Risks 2015: 10th Edition* (Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2015), 16, accessed January 17, 2016, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_ Risks_2015_Report15.pdf.

[5] Department of Defense, *Department of Defense Counternarcotics & Global Threats Strategy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 4, accessed December 16, 2015, https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=721746.

[6] National Security Council, *Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime,* 6.

[7] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Estimating Illicit Financial Flows Resulting from Drug Trafficking and other Transnational Organized Crimes* (Vienna: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011), 35, accessed December 16, 2015, https://www.unodc.org/ documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Illicit_financial_flows_2011_web.pdf.

[8] Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, "IEG of the Global Commons," United Nations Environment Programme, accessed March 21, 2016, http://www.unep.org/ delc/GlobalCommons/tabid/54404/. The United Nations Division of Environmental Law and Conventions defines the global commons as "resource domains or areas that lie outside of the political reach of any one nation State. Thus international law identifies four global commons namely: the High Seas; the Atmosphere; Antarctica; and Outer Space. These areas have historically been guided by the principle of the common heritage of humankind - the open access

While no two operational environments are the same, the focus here, will be on the actions taken in SOUTHCOM's area of responsibility, as a way to propose a framework every Combatant Command may employ to counter the influence of TCOs.

The thesis of this monograph is that Political Warfare can serve as the framework by which the USG may achieve strategic objectives, in whole or in part, and defeat TCOs. The concept seeks to synchronize and sequence all the instruments of national power. The notion is not new, as it was most notably prescribed in 1947, by US Foreign Service Officer George F. Kennan in support of the Cold War.[9] Political Warfare as posited by Kennan in 1948, sought to utilize diplomatic, informational, economic, as well as covert military means to achieve national strategic aims against a near-peer competitor.[10] In the twenty-first century, Political Warfare has morphed from the Kennan definition to account for a different type of adversary in the current operating environment.

In the current operational environment, Political Warfare seeks to leverage the organizational and technological advances within the instruments of national power while at the same time recognizing and embracing the notion that in international relations there exists no space between war and peace, rather only a "perpetual struggle, in and out of war."[11] Acknowledging this continuum, strategists balance the menu of options available through the

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doctrine or the *mare liberum* (free sea for everyone) in the case of the High Seas."

[9] United States Department of State, Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, "Milestones: 1945-1952. Kennan and Containment, 1947," United States Department of Defense, accessed March 21, 2016, https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/kennan. George F. Kennan was "a career Foreign Service Officer, [who] formulated the policy of 'containment,' the basic United States strategy for fighting the cold war (1947–1989) with the Soviet Union."

[10] George Kennan, "The Inauguration of Organized Political Warfare - Policy Planning Memorandum," May 4, 1948, National Archives and Records Administration, RG 273, Records of the National Security Council, NSC 10/2, accessed December 17, 2015, http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/history/johnson/65ciafounding3.htm.

[11] Ibid.

instruments of national power with the fiscally constrained and politically sensitive environment in which the USG currently operates. Political Warfare serves to bridge these constraints with tools that allow for political flexibility within the globalized world.

Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, demonstrates how Political Warfare can be used to defeat TCOs in the gray zone.[12] In 1999, the Government of Colombia (GOC) and the USG developed Plan Colombia, which was a comprehensive initiative to restore civil order in Colombia. A study of Plan Colombia and its subsequent initiatives' execution and results will highlight how a Political Warfare approach reinstates human security in an area devastated by corruption and violence. Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, such as Plan *Patriota,* sought to curb the corruption and violence perpetrated by the drug cartels as well as end right-wing and left-wing armed political insurrections. Plan Colombia is a testament to developing unity of effort. In the next section, this paper will develop a broader background of the operational environment that incubated Plan Colombia.

Background

To frame this security challenge, the spotlight will focus on TCOs operating in Colombia. However, TCOs operate with impunity throughout the global commons. According to a 2014 global survey, "people in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East all see crime and corruption as the greatest problem in their countries."[13] Michael C. Kenney, an Assistant

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[12] Michael J. Mazarr, *Mastering The Gray Zone: Understanding A Changing Era of Conflict* (Carlisle Barracks: United States Army War College Press, 2015), 2. The gray zone, as examined by Dr. Michael Mazarr, a Senior Political Scientist at the RAND Corporation and Associate Program Director of the Army's Arroyo Center, depicts an environment in which actors "maneuver in the ambiguous no-man's-land between peace and war, reflecting the sort of aggressive, persistent, determined campaigns characteristic of warfare but without the overt use of military force."

[13] Pew Research Center, *Crime and Corruption Top Problems in Emerging and Developing Countries* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2014), 2, accessed December 16, 2015, http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2014/11/Pew-Research-Center-Country-Problems-and-

Professor of Public Policy and Political Science at Penn State University, argues that traditional

thinking towards the conduct and configuration of criminal organizations is outdated because

these mobile and flexible organizations learn and adapt.[14] In doing so, they have become

engrained in the fabric of certain societies, including Colombia.

Traditional thinking has led many to believe that activities pursued by criminal entities

are the responsibility of law enforcement agencies. Unfortunately, the ability of these criminal

organizations to develop protections under state law via influence on policymakers may make

them unprosecutable by law enforcement agencies.[15] Conversely, a strong militarized response to

criminal activity conjures up images of harsh dictatorships which guerrilla organizations such as

the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC) and the *Ejército de Liberación*

Nacional (ELN) highlight as part of their political narrative to the local populace.[16] In 2000, with

Institutions-Report-FINAL-November-6-2014.pdf.

[14] Michael C. Kenney, "Outsmarting the State: A Comparative Case Study of the Learning Capacity of Colombian Drug Trafficking Organizations and Government Drug Enforcement Agencies" (PhD diss., University of Florida, 2002), xiii, accessed November 15, 2015, https://archive.org/stream/outsmartingstate00kenn#page/n11/mode/2up. Michael C. Kenney conducted a study on learning organizations and determined that the Colombian drug cartels were learning and adapting far faster than those who were pursuing them. "The persistence of the Colombia drug dilemma is in part due to the ability of criminal enterprises to alter their organizational structures and behavior in response to information and experience, store this knowledge…and select and retain innovations that produce satisfactory outcomes."

[15] Moises Naim, "Mafia States: Organized Crime Takes Office," *Foreign Affairs*, 91, no. 3 (May/June 2012): 101, accessed January 17, 2016, http://www.globalinitiative.net/wpfb-file/mafia-states-pdf/. Moises Naim discusses the fusion of criminal organizations and traditional state policymakers. The friction on the international stage is the unpredictability of these entities. "As a result, their behavior is difficult to predict, making them particularly dangerous actors in the international environment."

[16] Juan Carlos Garzon, *Mafia & Co.: The Criminal Networks in Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia*, trans. Kathy Ogle (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, 2008), 17, accessed January 17, 2016, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/mafiaandcompany_reducedsize.pdf. Garzon discusses the fear of the local populace of military intervention in criminal policing because of the historical images imprinted by dictatorial armies controlling their country. "Human rights organizations are concerned, and military intervention in internal matters could allow armies to once again exercise the kind of political

Colombia on the brink of becoming one of these entities in which criminal organizations determine foreign policy, Colombian President Andres Pastrana developed Plan Colombia.

Plan Colombia forced the US to work in an operational environment in which actors were engaged in a competition for the sovereignty of Colombia. This gray zone challenge was "characterized by ambiguity about the nature of the conflict, opacity of the parties involved, [and] uncertainty about the relevant policy and legal frameworks."[17] From 1993 to 2000, the US policy in Colombia centered on targeting drug production. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, US policymakers determined that terrorists were funding their activities through illicit criminal activities, thereby linking TCOs to a national security threat. The Plan Colombia case study seeks to analyze how the US employed multiple instruments of national power to defeat Colombian TCOs operating within the gray zone over an extended period of time. From this analysis, it becomes apparent that defeating TCOs in other operating environments may require a comprehensive approach.[18]

Research Methodology

The goal of this study is to determine whether certain principles of Plan Colombia may be utilized to defeat TCOs in other operational environments. Acknowledging that the operational environment is inherently varied due to multiple factors such as religion, culture, geography, and

pressure they had in what some see as a sinister past."

[17] United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM), *The Gray Zone*, White Paper, (Tampa: SOCOM, 2015), 1.

[18] Ivan Briscoe and Pamela Kalkman, *The New Criminal Powers: The Spread of Illicit Links to Politics Across the World and How it can be Tackled* (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2016), 16, accessed February 16, 2016, http://www.globalinitiative.net /wpfb-file/briscoe-kalkman-the-new-criminal-powers-feb-2016-pdf/. Briscoe and Kalkman highlight the fact that criminal activity and networks have become so embedded in communities that their practices almost become status quo, therefore simply targeting these organizations with a militarized response will only present long term problems. "This embedding of criminal practice at the community level has signaled a need to consider policy responses beyond traditional law enforcement and imprisonment."

politics, this investigation seeks to identify principles of Political Warfare employed in Plan Colombia that are widely applicable. Principle sources for this study include academic and professional journal articles, reports and books, as well as national security strategy documents and joint service doctrine.

Using process tracing, a case study of Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, will seek to demonstrate how Political Warfare may be waged in a resource constrained environment to defeat TCOs. Furthermore, it will seek to illustrate how a small military footprint was able to not only address the critical physical security issues within Colombia, but also to demonstrate how improving physical security may influence other aspects of human security, thereby limiting the influence TCOs have in an environment. The application of process tracing seeks to explore the linkages between causes and effects that occurred throughout Plan Colombia to determine which actions may prove more universally advantageous for other Combatant Commanders facing similar issues.[19]

Literature Review

In the following sections, the monograph describes the threat of TCOs. Additionally, the literature review section will explain the gray zone as a construct within the operational environment. Last, this section will present depictions of how Political Warfare is used to defeat TCOs. Throughout the literature review, sources will be introduced to highlight key terms and theories to guide the investigation of Plan Colombia.

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[19] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), 6. For George and Bennett, trace processing "attempts to trace the links between possible causes and observed outcomes." The goal here is to examine how Political Warfare (the mechanism) shaped an environment to defeat TCOs.

The Threat of TCOs

The United Nations (UN) Office on Drugs and Crime 2010 report, *The Globalization of Crime: A Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment (UN Threat Assessment)*, asserts that "Crime is fueling corruption, infiltrating business and politics, and hindering development. [Moreover] it is undermining governance by empowering those who operate outside the law."[20] The threat, however, extends further when one considers that TCOs have now infiltrated so far into the fabric of society that in some instances they are even protected by states.

For example, in 2010, Walid Makled was arrested in Colombia. Known as "the Turk," he is reported to be one of the most powerful narco-traffickers in the world. His rise to success allowed him to purchase the second largest airline in Venezuela as well as to own a significant portion of the country's largest port, *Puerto Cabello*. When questioned in Colombia as to how he was able to maintain such a large narco-trafficking empire, Makled indicated that those at the highest levels in the Venezuelan military and government were complicit in his operations.[21]

The interconnectedness of organized crime and corruption highlights the fragility societies now face. The balance between a democratic society, defined by transparency and equality, with the desires of politicians to remain in power by accumulating political capital, creates an environment in which state subversion is easily achieved by those who require the resources "to keep power in an intrinsically shallow form of democracy."[22] In some countries, TCOs are no longer entities operating in the shadows; they now exact as much influence as

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[20] United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, *The Globalization of Crime: A Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment* (Vienna: United Nations, 2010), ii, accessed November 15, 2015, https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/TOCTA_Report_2010_low_res.pdf.

[21] "Walid Makled," InSight Crime, accessed February 12, 2016, http://www.insightcrime.org/venezuela-organized-crime-news/walid-makled.

[22] Briscoe and Kalkman, 14.

multinational corporations.[23] These TCOs are creating sanctuaries in multiple ungoverned and under-governed spaces where law enforcement is outgunned or even non-existent. The tyranny of space, and complicity from state actors, provides the TCOs with the ability to operate with impunity.[24]

Having recognized or created the spaces in which to operate, the 'convergence' of interests amongst "drug cartels, terrorists, traffickers and other criminal enterprises" presents a clear threat to US national security as well as harmony within the global commons.[25] The protean nature of TCOs demonstrates the complexity of the problem states face when confronting these organizations. This convergence creates a backdrop in which the operational environment is littered with "aggressive, perspective-dependent, and ambiguous" strategies.[26]

Angel Rabasa and Peter Chalk explored the intersection between criminal organizations and their growing propensity to partner with insurgent political movements in Colombia. In *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability*, Rabasa and Chalk explored how the illegal drug economy, coupled with a growing armed resistance to state authority, exacerbated deeper problems within Colombian society.[27] However, the nature of the transnational criminal is to export their operations outside the borders

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[23] Moises, 103.

[24] Robert D. Lamb, *Ungoverned Areas and Threats from Safe Havens: A Final Report of the Ungoverned Areas Project* (Washington, DC: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, 2008), 15, accessed January 15, 2016, www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=ADA479805.

[25] Hermann G. Hasken III, "Beyong Find, Fix, Finish: Establishing a Counter-Network Interagency Organization to Combat the Convergence of Globally Connected Threat Networks," *A Journal of National Security Studies* (Fall 2014): 65, accessed January 16, 2015, https://www.usnwc.edu/Publications/-Luce-nt-/Archives/2014/Special-Edition/Hasken_Inter AgencyPartnershipAward__final_formatti.aspx.

[26] SOCOM, *The Gray Zone*, 1.

[27] Angel Rabasa and Peter Chalk, *Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001), XIV.

of an undergoverned space to capitalize on the ever-growing globalization of world markets. To achieve this feat, TCOs depend upon corrupt governmental officials to facilitate their operations.[28] Therefore, TCOs play a debilitating and damaging role not only within specific countries, but also in the global commons. The next section of the literature review will discuss the nature of the global commons, in particular the construct of the gray zone.

The Gray Zone

The gray zone refers to the arena in which international relations exist outside of clearly defined war or peace. Whereas one may classify war in the black zone and peace in the white zone, the gray zone is codified to represent the actions of actors short of war and short of peace. Actors perpetually participate in this arena to gain an advantage and attempt to impose their will upon another actor. Activities that reside within this zone are often characterized as "irregular warfare, low-intensity conflict, asymmetric warfare, Military Operations Other Than War" or even Realistic Deterrence as described by US Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird.[29] The gray zone represents the continuum of politics and attempts to illustrate that "even the ultimate

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[28] Briscoe and Kalkman, 24. "Corruption has been the necessary condition for the expansion of criminal networks within states and across state borders, ensuring a permissive or even cooperative response from law enforcement, judicial and political actors to illicit activity."

[29] Melvin R. Laird, "Statement of Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird Before the 92nd Congress House Armed Services Committee on the FY 1973 Defense Budget and FY 1973-1977 Program" (Washington, DC, February 17, 1972), 21-22, accessed March 1, 2016, http://history. defense.gov/Portals/70/Documents/annual_reports/1973_DoD_AR.pdf; United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), *Comprehensive Deterrence,* White Paper. (Fort Bragg: USASOC, 2015), 2. Secretary Laird noted, "The ultimate goal of the Strategy of Realistic Deterrence is to discourage -- and ultimately to eliminate -- the use of military force as a means by which one nation seeks to impose its will upon another. Military power in the hands of nations that wish to preserve peace and freedom is an essential part of this strategy, although military power alone cannot achieve the objective. As long as the threat of aggression against the independence and territorial integrity of nations with whom we share common interests exists, our country and our friends and allies must maintain strong military forces to deter conflict. Further our strategy must provide the defense capability necessary to protect our nation and its interests should deterrence fail.

outcome of a war is not always to be regarded as final."[30] The term has gained recent popularity as actors observe an environment in which resources are scarce and traditional warfare has become unlikely. The gray zone helps highlight the "perpetual rhythm of struggle, in and out of war."[31]

The term gray zone has resonated in the security sector, especially within the US Special Operations Command (SOCOM). Their recent white paper, *The Gray Zone*, examines the notion as well as opportunities to operate within the environment. Dr. Michael J. Mazarr, a Senior Political Scientist at the RAND Corporation and Associate Program Director of the Army's Arroyo Center, examines the gray zone from a model centered on how states compete with one another in this environment. His work, *Mastering the Gray Zone: Understanding a Changing Era of Conflict*, is focused on state versus state conduct. However, Dr. Mazarr's effort also provides insightful analysis to address the competition of states with non-state and sub-state actors.

Figure 1, on page 12, highlights the activities that occur in the gray zone where the continuum of conflict is constantly in motion. This continuum begins with a dispute in which two or more entities engage in an issue of contention. In the dispute phase, the actors attempt to gain a position of advantage through diplomatic, legal or informational means. The issue becomes a conflict and enters the gray zone when tensions between the actors escalates.[32]

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[30] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 80.

[31] Kennan.

[32] Milan N. Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Newport: US Naval War College, 2007), IX-175.
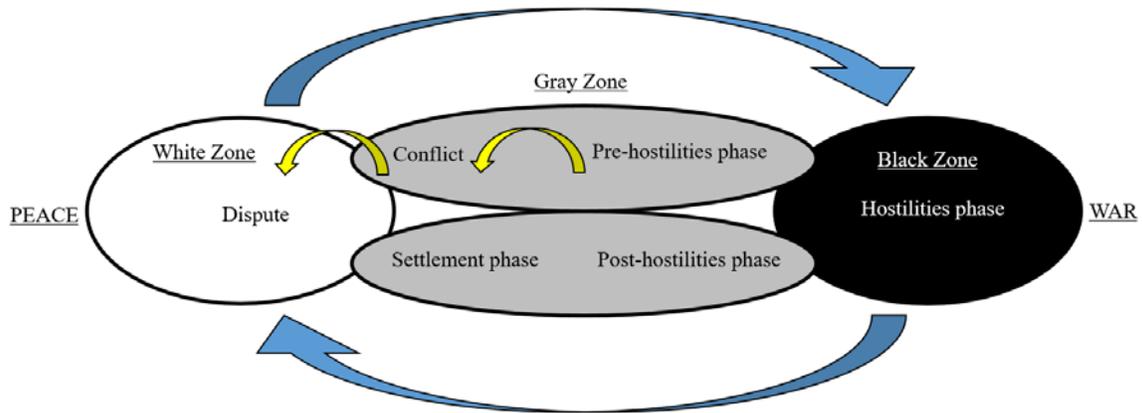
Figure 1. The Continuum of Conflict in the Gray Zone

Source: Milan N. Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Newport: US Naval War College, 2007), IX-175; United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM), *The Gray Zone*, White Paper, (Tampa: SOCOM, 2015. Figure 1 was developed by the author of the monograph derived from aspects discussed in Dr. Vego's work and SOCOM's white paper, *The Gray Zone.*

During the conflict phase, "fundamental differences in truths, values, and interests emerge" making it difficult to resolve the issue.[33] There is the possibility to revert to the dispute phase, highlighted by the yellow arrows in Figure 1, but in all likelihood, the fundamental differences result in an escalation to the pre-hostilities phase. In this phase, the actors introduce the threat of a traditional military option into consideration to resolve the issue. During this phase, the military instrument may be employed, but only to conduct operations that fall short of lethal force, such as a show of force. The other tools of persuasion, however, continue to dominate this phase and may lead the issue to de-escalate back to the conflict stage, once again highlighted by the yellow arrows in Figure 1. If the differences continue to escalate though, the issue transitions into the hostilities phase in which military force is the primary instrument of influence to impose one's will on the other.[34]

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[33] Vego, IX-175.

[34] Ibid.

Once the issue has escalated to the hostilities phase, the actors cannot revert to the pre-hostilities phase due to the emotional impact the hostilities phase has on the actors. They must pursue the entirety of the model to resolve the dispute. In the post-hostilities phase, war termination may have been achieved, but the root cause of the dispute still exists, setting the stage for conflict termination and conflict resolution.[35] The dispute then transitions to the settlement phase, where the root cause of the dispute may be resolved, however, in most cases the "end of the current conflict sows the seeds of the next conflict," thereby illustrating the continuum of conflict.[36]

The gray zone is an arena in which actors employ military and non-military instruments of national power to either avoid "outright, conventional conflict" or to shape the operational environment before and after the hostilities phase.[37] Typical military operations within the gray zone may include Civil Affairs Operations, Military Information Support Operations, Foreign Humanitarian Assistance, Counterterrorism, Hostage Rescue and Recovery, Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction, Special Reconnaissance, Unconventional Warfare, Foreign Internal

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[35] Vego, IX-175-176. War termination, conflict termination and conflict resolution are all separate events in the continuum of conflict. According to Dr. Vego, "War termination is the cessation of active armed hostilities between two or more warring parties." However, that does not mean that the root cause of the dispute has been addressed, it simply means that a military victory has been achieved by one side. Dr. Vego highlights that "although the war might end, that usually does not mean that the conflict ends as well." As such, once war termination has been achieved, the stage is set for conflict termination to begin in the post-hostilities phase. During this time, the sides begin negotiations to resolve the conflict while a subset of hostilities continue. Dr. Vego notes, "The conflict also may continue under other means, such as terrorism, insurgency, cyberwar, economic disruptions, or acts of civil disobedience." Eventually, the parties will reach a negotiated settlement, ending the conflict termination event, and transitioning into the conflict resolution event and settlement phase. For Dr. Vego, "Conflict resolution means the end of conflict. It is described as the process of resolving the root causes of conflict and reaching a final settlement." Successful conflict resolution requires all parties to accept the terms, however, these terms may eventually lead to setting the stage for the next dispute thereby creating the cyclical nature in the continuum of conflict.

[36] Ibid., IX-175.

[37] Mazarr, 56.

Defense, and Security Force Assistance.[38] While these operations are historically linked to the special operations community, they are all inherently structured as forms of influence and engagement. In essence, the most influential military activities in the gray zone are military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence.[39] These activities overtly highlight the power of the US military without having to engage in a conventional conflict. So much of today's operational environment revolves "around the information environment and perceptions, and states try to gain the upper hand with coercive actions short of large-scale military use."[40] With that being said, the role of the military in the gray zone must be subordinate to the other instruments of national power to ensure military aggression does not incite an unwanted escalation into the hostilities phase.

TCOs target human security in the gray zone to capitalize on instability in the region. While difficult to define, the human security realm is the cognitive operational environment TCOs target and the environment in which Political Warfare can best serve to defeat TCOs. The UN Human Security Unit's handbook helps to codify the important aspects of human security.[41] Following that handbook, the focus of this investigation will discuss levels of corruption,

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[38] Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), x-xii.

[39] Joint Publication (JP) 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013), I-15.

[40] Mazarr, 57.

[41] United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, *Human Security in Theory and Practice: An Overview of the Human Security Concept and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security* (New York: United Nations, 2009), 5-6, accessed January 15, 2016, http://www.un.org/humansecurity/sites/www.un.org.humansecurity/files/human_security_in_theory_and_practice_english.pdf. The report defines human security as "protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life… It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity." Furthermore, the report highlights that economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security are intrinsically connected thereby requiring a comprehensive approach to address all aspects of human security.

governance, the rule of law, personal security and economic security. Such an approach is in line with James Rochlin's book, *Social Forces and the Revolution in Military Affairs*, where the author examines how guerrillas, paramilitaries, and TCOs have impacted human security. He argues that a Revolution in Military Affairs occurred in Colombia, thereby creating a fertile environment for social change. The people of Colombia had been under siege since the 1960s, and given an opportunity to change, they were willing to stand up against those that committed atrocities against them. Rochlin argues that a region must be willing to change for change to actually occur and Colombia was ripe for just such a change.[42]

Countering the Threat of TCOs Through Political Warfare

      Political Warfare is not a new concept, but the litany of terms which have graced the halls of the Pentagon to support Political Warfare continue to breed confusion as to its nature. The purpose of this section is to provide clear definitions for the terms used throughout this exploration. The US Army Special Operations Command's (USASOC) white paper, *Special Operations Forces Support to Political Warfare,* as well as George Kennan's 1948 Policy Planning Staff Memorandum, "The Inauguration of Organized Political Warfare," will guide the discussion of Political Warfare. Whether one uses terms such as "whole of government" or all the "instruments of national power", the underlying goal of Political Warfare is about influencing the actions of allies and adversaries. Political Warfare involves the synchronization and sequencing of actions along the lines of persuasive and/or coercive diplomacy, economic aid and economic coercion, security sector assistance, unconventional warfare, and inform and influence activities, as ways to influence the human dimension.[43]

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[42] James F. Rochlin, *Social Forces and the Revolution in Military Affairs* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 10.

[43] United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), *Special Operations Forces Support to Political Warfare*, White Paper, (Fort Bragg: USASOC, 2015), 13, accessed

Another USG policy document, the 2015 National Security Strategy speaks to the linkage between failing states, criminal networks, and insecurity by highlighting a need to maintain a whole of government approach when attacking entities which threaten regional harmony. It notes that "[security] gains, however, are put at risk by weak institutions, high crime rates, powerful organized crime groups, an illicit drug trade, lingering economic disparity, and inadequate education and health systems."[44] However, USG foreign assistance is not a new policy to combat such external threats. Rhonda Callaway and Elizabeth Matthews discuss the history of USG policy decisions to combat regional security threats in their book, *Strategic US Foreign Assistance: The Battle between Human Rights and National Security*. Callaway and Matthews explore how the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act has evolved to target regional security threats. Their analysis addresses the role the USG took in Colombia as it recognized the "link between foreign aid and improved human rights."[45]

Finally, this monograph will investigate the role military forces played in the implementation of Plan Colombia. The US military force employed in support of Plan Colombia was quite small because the political environment limited their involvement to training and advising Colombian security forces. The Combat Studies Institute published *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008*, which emphasizes the importance and difficulty of advising and assisting host nation security forces in

September 23, 2015, http://www.soc.mil/swcs/ProjectGray/Support%20to%20Political%20 Warfare%20White%20Paper%20v2.3-RMT%20(10MAR2015)%20%20%20.pdf.

[44] National Security Council, *National Security Strategy 2015* (Washington, DC: National Security Council, 2015), 27.

[45] Rhonda L. Callaway and Elizabeth G. Matthews, *Strategic US Foreign Assistance* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), 11. The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan were implemented as a means to combat communism with social programs targeting political, economic, and social philosophies.

Colombia.[46] Given this difficulty, the Plan Colombia case study will provide insight into the important relationships US military forces must forge within the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational construct. Having established the necessary context on the nature of the USG response to TCOs, the following paragraphs will focus on the counterargument against Plan Colombia.

There are numerous sources commending the combined efforts of the GOC and the USG in establishing objectives and goals to combat the guerrillas, paramilitaries, and TCOs. However there are just as many sources which suggest Plan Colombia and its subsequent initiatives have done little to resolve the situation in Colombia. Some sources even posit that the TCOs have been able to increase their influence outside of Colombia. They argue that the TCOs in Colombia are working more closely with other TCOs throughout Latin America. Furthermore, critics believe Plan Colombia only improved security within Bogota while the rural countryside continues to be ruled by guerrillas, paramilitaries, and TCOs. The work of critics like Beatrice Acevedo, Dave Bewley-Taylor, and Coletta Youngers, as well as Arlene Tickner, serve as a counterargument to presenting Plan Colombia as a viable framework for combatting TCOs networks in other regions.[47] This critique is valuable for understanding the potential limitations to further successes when combatting TCOs.

A critical distinction must be made between an insurgency, guerrilla forces, and paramilitary forces in order to frame the operational environment. An insurgency is incubated in a

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46 Robert D. Ramsey, III, *From El Billar to Operations Fenix and Jaque: The Colombian Security Force Experience, 1998-2008* (Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009), iii.

47 Beatriz Acevedo, Dave Bewley-Taylor, and Coletta Youngers, *Ten Years of Plan Colombia: An Analytic Assessment* (Oxford: The Beckley Foundation, 2008), 1-11, accessed September 9, 2016, http://www.beckleyfoundation.org/pdf/BriefingPaper_16.pdf; Arlene B. Tickner, *Colombia, the United States, and Security Cooperation by Proxy* (Washington, DC: Washington Office on Latin America, 2014), 1-10.

society where certain actors feel oppressed by the state and therefore they gather for the purposes of achieving a specific aim, which has political implications.[48] This distinction underscores the importance of political motives in defining an insurgency. Insurgencies are organized "around interrelated elements of an underground, an auxiliary, and a guerrilla force."[49] The purveyors of violence, in an insurgency, are the guerrilla forces. In 1964, the FARC and ELN established themselves as guerrilla forces in support of communist inspired insurgencies.[50] As a means to address the guerrilla forces, armed civilian militias were formed under Presidential Decree 3398 which formally authorized the creation of self-defense paramilitary forces.[51] The paramilitary forces grew in size with support from narco-traffickers, land owners, and political elites. In 1997, local and regional paramilitary groups merged to form one of the largest right-wing paramilitary groups, the United Self Defense Groups of Colombia (AUC).[52] Eventually, the FARC, ELN and AUC all entered into the drug trade to fund their activities thereby making them targets for the USG.[53]

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[48] Aaron M. Young and David H. Gray, "Insurgency, Guerilla Warfare and Terrorism: Conflict and its Application for the Future," *Global Security Studies* 2, no. 4 (Fall 2011): 66, accessed March 21, 2016, http://globalsecuritystudies.com/Young%20Insurgency%20 FINAL.pdf.

[49] JP 3-05, II-8.

[50] Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, "Mapping Militant Organizations: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - People's Army," Stanford University, accessed March 21, 2016, https://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/89; Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, "Mapping Militant Organizations: National Liberation Army (Colombia)," Stanford University, accessed March 21, 2016, http://web.stanford .edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/87.

[51] Human Rights Watch, *Colombia's Killer Networks: The Military-Paramilitary Partnership and the United States* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1996), accessed March 21, 2016, https://www.hrw.org/reports/1996/killer2.htm#14.

[52] Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, "Mapping Militant Organizations: United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia," Stanford University, accessed March 21, 2016, https://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/85.

The overall goal of this study is to assess what aspects of Political Warfare utilized in Plan Colombia may be used to defeat TCOs elsewhere. Numerous case studies and articles have been written to discuss the soundness of Plan Colombia. Some authors have argued that the capital spent on Plan Colombia has failed to achieve the USG's desired strategic endstate, the elimination of the illegal narcotics industry, while others have argued as to whether the USG's 'War on Drugs' strategy retains validity at all.[54] Some suggest that the 'War on Drugs' should focus its efforts on the supply side of the industry thereby targeting those who produce and traffic the illegal narcotics.[55] Others suggest that a more concerted effort should be focused on demand, and as such, a greater emphasis should be invested in curbing domestic use of illegal narcotics.[56] This investigation addresses the 'War on Drugs' because it was the catalyst for policy decisions in Colombia, however, the examination of Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, does not seek to enter into the discussion as to whether the 'War on Drugs' appropriately addresses the

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[53] Ramsey, 4-11.

[54] "US Policy in Colombia," Amnesty International USA, accessed February 16, 2016, http://www.amnestyusa.org/our-work/countries/americas/colombia/us-policy-in-colombia; "Drug Policy: Promoting more effective and humane drug policies," Washington Office on Latin America, accessed January 15, 2016, http://www.wola.org/program/drug_policy. Amnesty International USA continues to argue that the US Policy in Colombia should cease based on continued reports of human rights abuses within the country. According to Amnesty International USA, "US policy has failed to reduce availability or use of cocaine in the US, and Colombia's human rights record remains deeply troubling." Additionally, the Washington Office on Latin America stated, "The U.S.-led 'War on Drugs' has failed to suppress the production, trafficking, or consumption of illegal drugs, while enriching and empowering criminal enterprises. The enforcement of harsh drug laws has led to human rights abuses, overcrowded prisons, and threats to democratic institutions."

[55] Vanda Felbab-Brown, "Improving Supply-Side Policies: Smarter Eradication, Interdiction and Alternative Livelihoods – and the Possibility of Licensing," *Ending the Drug Wars: Report of the LSE Expert Group on the Economics of Drug Policy*, ed. John Collins (London: London School of Economics and Political Science, 2014), 41, accessed March 23, 2016, http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/LSE-IDEAS-DRUGS-REPORT-FINAL-WEB.pdf.

[56] National Review Online Staff, "The War on Drugs Is Lost," *National Review*, accessed March 23, 2016, http://www.nationalreview.com/article/383913/war-drugs-lost-nro-staff.

supply and demand doctrine behind narco-trafficking. The focus is not on the validity of the current USG's drug policy, but whether Political Warfare was a viable means within Plan Colombia to defeat TCOs in the gray zone.

Plan Colombia

In the next section, a brief history will be provided for a backdrop to the operational environment in which Political Warfare sought to curb threats to human security as well as threats to Colombia's sovereignty. Understanding the social forces influencing Colombia today requires an examination of the tensions and violence that have both built and plagued the country since Spain invaded the Andean Region in the sixteenth century. For the most part, Spanish colonial rule prevented large-scale violence from dominating the country until 1819, when Simon Bolivar won Gran Colombia's independence.[57]

Once Simon Bolivar and his guerrilla warfare army won Gran Colombia's independence, Colombia shifted into a state of fragmentation.[58] The country was marked by constant civil wars between the Conservative and Liberal political parties which resulted in the deaths of over 35,000 Colombians between 1820 and 1879. Violence was engrained into Colombian culture and political disputes were typically resolved with bloodshed. The fractured society led to an additional civil war which closed the nineteenth, and opened the twentieth, century. The War of 1000 Days, from 1899 to 1902, cost the lives of 200,000 Colombians. The devastation of it purportedly shocked Colombians into resolving their differences through negotiation rather than violence. Unfortunately, this period of calm only lasted a few decades until yet another civil war erupted.[59] Between 1948 and 1958, Colombians were embattled in another period of civil unrest.

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[57] John Lynch, *Simon Bolivar: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 134.

[58] Ibid., 268.

[59] Rochlin, 22.

Most commonly known as *La Violencia*, this episode of civil unrest reportedly cost the lives of another 200,000 Colombians.[60]

The Colombian civil wars had many root causes, but predominantly the conflict represented a chasm between the Liberal and Conservative parties and the Colombian people who were not represented by either party. The Liberal Party represented the agro-export and mercantile contingent, while the Conservative Party represented the local agrarian and land owning elite. Those who eventually came to develop the guerrilla forces were poor farmers who lacked representation in the Colombian political system. For one observer, *La Violencia* represented "one of the most intense and protracted cases of widespread collective violence in contemporary history."[61] Once again, violence was tied to social change within Colombia.[62]

As a result of *La Violencia*, many Colombians looked to the Marxist-inspired Cuban Revolution as a model to organize efforts focused on overthrowing the government through the means of violence.[63] The left-wing insurgencies that developed in Colombia following *La Violencia* were significant threats to their national security for two reasons: violence, and the criminal economic enterprises undertaken to fund their political activities.[64] *La Violencia* had a

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[60] Rochlin, 22-24.

[61] Paul H. Oquist, *Violence, Conflict, and Politics in Colombia* (Waltham: Academic Press, 1980), 10.

[62] Rochlin, 22-24.

[63] John C. Chasteen, "Fighting Words: The Discourse of Insurgency in Latin American History," *Latin American Research Review* 28, no. 3 (1993): 84, accessed January 17, 2016, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2503611. Latin America's history is based on guerrilla warfare as countries sought to break from colonial rule. Revolutionaries such as Che Guevara and Emiliano Zapata established themselves as heroes of independence but even before them Tupac Amaru, the Andean leader during the 1780s, sought to overthrow established ruling parties through guerrilla warfare. Arguably, the Cuban Revolution in the 1950s is seen as the catalyst for insurgent groups like the FARC, ELN, and M-19 in Colombia.

[64] Rochlin, 29-36. The FARC formed in 1964 as the paramilitary wing of the Colombian Communist Party. The other significant left-wing guerrilla organization is the National

significant impact on the people of Colombia because of the horrific acts that the populace witnessed at the hands of the established government. As such, when the insurgents later employed guerrilla warfare as a tool to combat governmental entities, the propensity of the populace sided with the insurgents. The local populace saw violence as a means to exact revenge for the atrocities they suffered during *La Violencia.*[65]

To fund their activities, the insurgents sought criminal economic enterprises. Most profitable amongst the enterprises was the production of cocaine to fuel a growing demand in North American countries like the US. The illicit economy funded the activities of insurgents but eventually brought with it a level of violence within the country that further fractured the masses.[66] In the 1960s and early 1970s, however, the US was not concerned with the illicit drug trade but rather with preventing the expansion of Soviet Union influence in the Latin American region.[67] The Cuban Revolution, in the 1950s, prompted a US policy focused on greater intervention by the USG into Latin America. George Kennan's 1948 Policy Memorandum served as the keystone document to deter Russian aggressions and support US intervention in Latin America. A number of influential supporting policies and strategies cascaded from Kennan's Policy Memorandum, to include US President John F. Kennedy's 1962 Overseas Internal Defense Policy which sought to address the growing concern over communist inspired revolutions in Latin America.[68] Additionally, in response to these policies Brigadier General

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Liberation Army, or ELN, which also began operating in 1964. Right-wing paramilitary organizations sprung up in opposition to the guerrillas. Wealthy landowners funded these paramilitaries to protect their illicit crops from the guerrillas. In the mid to late 1990's most of these paramilitary groups consolidated under the umbrella of the United Self Defense Forces of Colombia, or AUC.

[65] Rochlin, 22.

[66] Ibid., 28.

[67] Ibid., 27.

Richard Stilwell drafted an assessment of appropriate military activities in Latin America to defeat Communist influence in Colombia.[69]

In the 1960s, the US devised Plan *Lazo*, an initiative meant to reorganize the Colombian military (COLMIL) to defeat the rising tide of Communist insurgencies. Unfortunately, the initiative brought with it zero means to address the root causes of the formation of the insurgencies within Colombia. Francisco Leal Buitrago, Professor of Sociology at the *Universidad de Los Andes*, noted that in the Cold War era, a military philosophy reverberated throughout Latin America, perpetrated by the US, inciting a need to address "internal enemies" as a way of defeating Soviet aggression in the Western Hemisphere. As a result, a concerted focus by military regimes on internal actors inspired by an external communist actor failed to address the internal social problems facing these societies and only enabled political violence. Nonetheless, at the time, the military aid package from the US to Colombia was the biggest US commitment in Latin America and demonstrated the continued commitment to military cooperation between the two countries.[70]

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[68] John F. Kennedy, *United States Overseas Internal Defense Policy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1962), accessed February 17, 2016, http://www.orchestrating power.org/lib/Nation%20Building/Interagency%20Policy/OIDP/OIDP.ppd. In 1962, with a growing trend of subversive insurgencies in Latin America, the USG developed the US Overseas Internal Defense Policy, which sought to provide guidance to all the tools of US national power as they attempted to defeat these growing movements. The document helped solidify Brigadier General Stilwell's memorandum on the role of the US military in these Latin American countries.

[69] Richard G. Stilwell, "Army Activities in Underdeveloped Areas Short of War," (Washington, DC: United States Secretary of the Army, October 13, 1961), 2. In his memorandum, Brigadier General Stilwell explores options to improve the "capability of local armed forces, Allied and neutral alike, to insure internal defense and deter external aggression." The options Brigadier General Stilwell noted included exporting US Army tactics and techniques to improve the capability and capacity of foreign militaries and paramilitaries. More importantly, however, he explained that exporting these capabilities "are effective only when applied in coordination within [the total array of US power resources]."

[70] Francisco Leal Buitrago, *La Seguridad Nacional a la Deriva: Del Frente Nacional a la Posguerra Fria* (Bogota: Alfaomega, 2002), 6-22, accessed March 1, 2016, http://www.flacso andes.edu.ec/libros/digital/45040.pdf; Rochlin, 27. Francisco Leal Buitrago discusses how the

In the 1970s, and into the 1980s, the priority on US policy towards Colombia had waned due to other competing priorities such as withdrawing from Vietnam and combatting the violent Sandinistas in El Salvador.[71] These two events would serve to influence future policies in Colombia. First, post-Vietnam US policy focused on avoiding large-scale counterinsurgency operations.[72] Secondly, in El Salvador, the US learned that its policies must emphasize human rights during the conduct of operations.[73] While US attention towards Colombia waned, right-wing and left-wing insurgency groups, paramilitaries, and narco-traffickers continued to entrench Colombia in a state of constant violent conflict. Observers noted that "the drug trade enriched the extreme local guerrilla and paramilitary group, and fueled profound corruption of an already feeble state."[74] The guerrilla forces, paramilitary groups, and narco-traffickers came to be seen as the power brokers within Colombia. A single Leviathan never emerged because each entity sought to impose its will on one another and the GOC was unable to suppress the subversive efforts of the various power brokers operating throughout the country.[75]

In the 1980s, US President Ronald Reagan developed initiatives to combat the rampant drug crisis facing the US. National Security Decision Directive 221, issued in 1986, shifted the US focus towards pursuing the source of illegal drugs. The policy sought "to halt the production

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Cold War developed a new military strategy in the Americas called *La Doctrina de Seguridad Nacional* (national security doctrine) which sought to address the communist inspired insurgencies in the Western Hemisphere.

[71] Rochlin, 27.

[72] Ramsey, 19.

[73] Ibid., 19.

[74] Rochlin, 28.

[75] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. A.P. Martinich (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2002), 95; Rochlin, 23. A Leviathan imposes such great will on the environment that all other parties are in awe of the Leviathan's power. As a result, the parties enter into a social contract in which the Leviathan provides protection to the parties but also rules over the parties.

and flow of illicit narcotics, reduce the ability of insurgent and terrorist groups to use drug

trafficking to support their activities and strengthen the ability of individual governments to

confront…these threats."[76] The directive sought to expand the role played by the Department of

Defense in pursuing the sources of illicit narco-trafficking.[77]

Further US policies, such as the 1986 and 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act, enhanced

executive authority to prosecute a 'War on Drugs'.[78] US President William Clinton, elected in

1993, made few changes to the policies being enacted as part of the 'War on Drugs'. However,

possibly the most significant contribution to US policymaking during this time was his 1993

Presidential Decision Directive 14, "U.S. Policy on International Counternarcotics in the Western

Hemisphere," in which US Counter Drug (CD) policy in the western hemisphere shifted from

interdiction efforts to targeting the criminal organizations producing and trafficking illicit

narcotics.[79]

On the surface, the efforts seemed to exact political gain for both the USG and the GOC.

In 1993, the Medellin drug kingpin, Pablo Escobar, was killed in a high-profile law enforcement

operation.[80] By 1995, the two major drug cartels in Colombia, the Medellin and Cali drug cartels,

[76] Ronald Reagan, National Security Decision Directive 221, "Narcotics and National Security" (April 8, 1986), Fact Sheet, accessed November 15, 2015, http://fas.org/irp/offdocs /nsdd/nsdd-221.htm.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Joint Publication (JP) 3-07.4, *Joint Counterdrug Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013), I-2.

[79] William J. Clinton, Presidential Decision Directive 14, "US Policy on International Counternarcotics in the Western Hemisphere" (November 3, 1993), 1-2, accessed November 15, 2015, http://fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd/pdd-14.pdf. The shift in policy towards Colombia was cemented by Presidential Decision Directive 14, US Policy on International Counternarcotics in the Western Hemisphere. The policy dictated, "The United States will treat as a serious national security threat the operations of international criminal narcotics' syndicates, requiring an extraordinary and coordinated response by civilian and military agencies engaged in national security."

were dismantled.[81] Unfortunately, the US policies, especially in Colombia, continued to focus on CD efforts which disregarded the complexity of the nexus between narcotics and insurgencies.[82]

The dismantling of the Medellin and Cali cartels only left a power vacuum in the narco-trafficking industry which the guerrilla groups and paramilitaries quickly filled.[83] Relations between the USG and the GOC soured in the 1990s as evidence surfaced that Colombian President Ernesto Samper was working closely with the drug cartels themselves.[84] Furthermore, Colombian drug exports were not in decline and human rights violations were being perpetrated by the Colombian security forces, guerrilla forces and the paramilitary groups.[85] Due to these issues, all USG assistance ceased in Colombia less the support provided to the Colombian National Police's (CNP) CD efforts.[86]

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[80] Steven Ambrus, "Colombia Drug Lord Escobar Dies in Shootout," *Los Angeles Times*, December 3, 1993, accessed January 4, 2016, http://articles.latimes.com/1993-12-03/news/mn-63509_1_pablo-escobar.

[81] Jeremy McDermott, "20 Years After Pablo: The Evolution of Colombia's Drug Trade," *InSight Crime*, December 3, 2013, accessed January 4, 2016, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/20-years-after-pablo-the-evolution-of-colombias-drug-trade. With the death of Pablo Escobar in 1993 and the arrest of the Rodriguez Orejuela brothers of the Cali cartel in 1995, it is believed the drug cartels shifted into smaller groups to run the drug business in Colombia.

[82] Rabasa and Chalk, 1.

[83] Rochlin, 28.

[84] Ibid., 28. In 1994, audiocassette recordings surfaced indicating that President Samper may have received a six-million-dollar personal payment from the Cali drug cartel.

[85] Ramsey, 21.

[86] Ibid., 20. During this timeframe, Colombia and the USG agreed that the Colombian National Police (CNP) would lead the CD effort in Colombia. As such, CD funding for the Colombian Military (COLMIL) ceased. At the time, this was beneficial for both countries in that the USG found the CNP more cooperative than the COLMIL. Additionally, the COLMIL were seen as the major Colombian government perpetrators of human rights violations. With the CNP in the lead of CD efforts, the COLMIL could focus on addressing the spreading violence generated by criminals, guerrillas, and other paramilitary groups. The separation of lines of effort reinforced the notion by the COLMIL that narco-trafficking was a crime and thus a police task. The separation between guerrillas and narco-traffickers would only exacerbate the situation as

USG assistance to Colombia was frozen until 1998, when policymakers in Washington learned that the successor to President Samper, Andres Pastrana, had begun peace negotiations with the FARC. As a means to begin the peace talks, President Pastrana had ceded to the FARC, "a piece of [Colombian] territory about the size of Switzerland," which became known as the *zona de despeje*.[87] The move frightened USG policymakers who pushed to restore relations with the GOC in order to prevent Colombia from becoming a narcostate controlled by leftist guerrillas. The tumultuous history of USG involvement in Colombia in the 1980s and 1990s became the catalyst for Plan Colombia.

From 1998 to 1999, the Pastrana administration and the FARC attempted to conduct peace negotiations but to no avail. In May 1999, President Pastrana presented his initiative, Plan Colombia. The goal was to "build a peace effort on three components: peace talks with the guerrillas; strengthen security forces; and international assistance in funding economic, political, social, and military programs."[88] The plan was endorsed by then Commander of SOUTHCOM, General Charles Wilhelm, and presented to US policymakers in Washington to seek funding assistance.[89]

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both countries failed to ascertain a shared understanding of the environment. Plan Colombia represented a new strategy designed to concurrently combat the insurgency and narco-traffickers and to improve the security and socioeconomic condition of Colombia.

[87] Rochlin, 28. Facing extreme pressure from the people of Colombia to stop the incessant violence and corruption, President Pastrana sought to exact a cease fire with the FARC. Unfortunately, the deteriorating security situation, rampant corruption within the government, and an inability to garner legislative support for peace, only served to enhance the FARC positions of advantage in the negotiations.

[88] Ramsey, 56.

[89] Charles E. Wilhelm, "Posture Statement of General Charles E. Wilhelm, United States Marine Corps Commander, United States Southern Command Before The Senate Armed Services Committee," (Washington, DC, April 4, 2000), accessed January 17, 2016, http://fas.org/irp/congress/2000_hr/00-03-23wilhelm.htm. "Plan Colombia provides a comprehensive national strategy designed to defeat the narco-traffickers and correct the ills they have visited on Colombia's society."

US support of Plan Colombia began in 2000. The US Congress approved the six year

Andean Counterdrug Initiative, and supplemented additional funding through a Foreign Military

Financing program, and the Department of Defense's central counternarcotics account.[90]

However, a disconnect between the USG and GOC occurred regarding its purpose. For Colombia,

the initiative was meant to regain control of their country which was facing deplorable human

security issues and a failing economy. For the USG, the objective of Plan Colombia was "simply

to end illicit drug trafficking to American customers."[91] This disconnect created tensions amongst

the GOC and the USG executors of the initiative. Nevertheless, the US military and other

interagency partners continued to work with the CNP and COLMIL to develop a cohesive

strategy to defeat the insurgent groups profiting from criminal activities.[92]

On September 11, 2001, the world changed following the terrorist attacks on the United

States. As a result, the USG publicly recognized the link between terrorist organizations and

TCOs.[93] With the focus on this nexus, the USG expanded the authorities of the US military in

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[90] Connie Veillette, *Plan Colombia: A Progress Report* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, June 22, 2005), CRS-1, accessed March 21, 2016, http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL32774.pdf.

[91] Ramsey, 59.

[92] Brian E. Sheridan, "Statement before House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere," (Washington, DC, September 21, 2000), accessed January 17, 2016, http://fas.org/irp/news/2000/09/irp-000921-colombia.htm. During the September 21, 2000 testimony of Brian E. Sheridan, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, he outlined the benefits and expanding character of cooperation under Plan Colombia between the US military and other interagency actors and Colombian security forces. "This effort is responsive to Plan Colombia and consistent with current U.S. policy. Furthermore, these programs, in coordination with other interagency efforts, form the core of a sound, responsive, and timely assistance package that will significantly enhance Colombia's ability to conduct effective counterdrug operations."

[93] James Mack, "Statement before House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere," (Washington, DC, October 10, 2001), accessed January 17, 2016, http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/inl/rls/rm/sep_oct/6215.htm. During the October 10, 2001 testimony of James Mack, Deputy Assistant for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, he highlighted "There often is a nexus between terrorism and organized

Colombia, shifting from its CD strategy to one of counterterrorism.[94]

In August 2002, Alvaro Uribe succeeded Pastrana as the president of Colombia after a surprisingly calm election cycle, despite fears of increased violence by the FARC and other guerrilla forces.[95] Upon assuming the office, President Uribe set forth his version of Plan Colombia, the Democratic Security and Defense Policy (DSDP). The plan sought to focus first on improving the capacity and capabilities of the Colombian security forces. In support of the DSDP, the USG drafted the National Security Presidential Decision/Presidential Decision Directive 18 and the nested Department of Defense Counternarcotics and Global Threats Strategy, thereby authorizing the US instruments of national power to use CD funds to pursue and target the guerrillas, narco-traffickers, and paramilitaries threatening the sovereignty of Colombia. The cooperative GOC and USG policies allowed the Colombian security forces to devise coherent strategies aimed at pursuing and prosecuting the organizations responsible for degrading the sovereignty of Colombia.[96]

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crime. Many of the skills and types of equipment needed to attack organized crime are applicable to combating terrorism."

[94] Gabriel Marcella, *The United States and Colombia: The Journey from Ambiguity to Strategic Clarity* (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, 2003), 61, accessed, January 18, 2016 http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB10.pdf. In November 2002, US President Bush signed National Security Presidential Directive 18, replacing President Clinton's Presidential Directive 14, which provided support to specific CD efforts. Presidential Directive 18 sought to fund counterterrorism efforts as a means to restore national sovereignty in Colombia.

[95] "The 10 March 2001 Parliamentary Elections in Colombia," International Crisis Group, accessed January 4, 2016, http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/latin-america-caribbean /andes/colombia/b001-the-10-march-2002-parliamentary-elections-in-colombia.aspx. Some attribute the lack of spectacular terrorist attacks during the election cycle to the extensive deployment of security forces into the *zona de despeje* which forced the FARC to disperse from their zone of support.

[96] James T. Hill, "Posture Statement of General James T. Hill, United States Army, Commander, United States Southern Command Before The 108th Congress House Armed Services Committee," (Washington, DC, March 24, 2004), accessed January 4, 2016, http://www. securityassistance.org/sites/default/files/Testimony_of_James_T_Hill_2004.pdf. On March 24, 2004, General James Hill, Commander of SOUTHCOM, testified in front of the Senate Armed

By the end of 2003, President Uribe's DSDP began to show promise. Security forces were establishing control in regions of the country that had long been controlled by guerrilla forces. Moreover, the largest right-wing paramilitary group in Colombia, the AUC, had demobilized, and road security throughout the country drastically improved.[97] Nonetheless, critical to the success of Plan Colombia was the resolution of the root causes that had torn the country apart.

In 2004, President Uribe introduced Plan *Patriota,* which sought to pursue the guerrilla forces into southern Colombia. Furthermore, with the assistance of the US Department of State, Colombia began to initiate reforms to its judicial system as well as measures to end corruption in the GOC. This initiative garnered popular support as the measures brought a sense of legitimacy to the GOC.[98] Despite these efforts, the guerrilla forces of the insurgent groups remained steadfast in their attacks against the government and sought refuge in the ungoverned spaces of Colombia. They developed defensive belts to prevent detection and pursuit from Colombian security forces.[99]

At the end of the 2005 fiscal year, US support to Plan Colombia through the Andean Counterdrug Initiative, Foreign Military Funding, and the Department of Defense's central

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Services Committee. During his testimony he noted how the expanded authorities under National Security Presidential Decision/Presidential Decision Directive 18 were facilitating greater cooperation between the US military and Colombian security forces. "Operations today are more efficient and effective because [of] our expanded authorities…Expanded Authority permits greater intelligence sharing and allows Colombia to use counterdrug funded equipment for counterterrorism missions."

[97] Ramsey, 108.

[98] Ibid., 111.

[99] "Colombia," The HALO Trust, accessed January 18, 2016, http://www.halotrust.org /where-we-work/colombia. According to the HALO Project, the foremost humanitarian landmine clearance organization in the world, "Colombia is currently one of the most mine-affected countries in the world, with more than 10,900 recorded deaths and injuries from landmines since 1990."

counternarcotics account was supposed to have ceased, nevertheless, with urging from the Bush

Administration, the US Congress agreed to continue to support Plan Colombia, and its subsequent

initiatives.[100] However, continued support required an exit strategy which prompted the adoption

of a phased transition of operations to the GOC.[101] The USG drafted and approved the Plan

Colombia Consolidation Phase to consolidate the progress made under Plan Colombia while

working to transition all operations to the GOC by 2008.[102]

President Uribe's consolidation plan, DSDP, accompanied the Plan Colombia

Consolidation Phase and became known as Plan *Consolidacion*. His goal was to transition

beyond the focus of regaining Colombian territory from the guerrilla forces, to begin improving

human security through civilian-led state action.[103] Between 2008 and 2012, the Colombian

security forces continued to pursue the guerrilla forces, and in fact launched a number of

successful raids which culminated in the rescue of some high profile hostages.[104] The raids also

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[100] Veillette, CRS-1.

[101] Ibid., CRS-2.

[102] Ramsey, 120.

[103] Adam Isacson and Abigail Poe, *After Plan Colombia: Evaluating "Integrated Action," The Next Phase of US Assistance* (Washington, DC: Center for International Policy, 2009), 7, accessed January 21, 2016, http://ccai-colombia.org/files/primarydocs/091203_col.pdf. Under Plan Consolidation, the GOC seeks to transition the priority of effort from security forces to government officials. "It is meant to have a civilian component from the very beginning, and it envisions the armed forces becoming a minor participant by its latter stages, when the state presence is considered consolidated."

[104] Maureen Orth, "Operation Checkmate: Inside Colombia's Hostage War," *Vanity Fair News* (October 3, 2008), accessed February 25, 2016, http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2008/11 /hostages200811. On July 2, 2008, Operation Jaque, was executed by Colombian security forces posing as international aid workers to rescue fifteen hostages from the FARC. Of the fifteen hostages, three were US contractors and one was possibly the most famous hostage since Patti Hearst. Ingrid Betancourt was a Colombian presidential candidate in 2002 when she was kidnapped. The successful prosecution of Operation Jaque sent Colombian President Uribe's approval rating within Colombia to ninety percent.

resulted in the death of key insurgency leadership figures.[105]

In 2010, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos replaced Alvaro Uribe, and in 2012 he announced that formal peace settlement discussions would begin with the FARC. In the spring of 2016, the GOC and the FARC are expected to sign off on the final aspects of the peace process thereby officially ending the conflict with the largest guerrilla organization in Colombia.[106] Unfortunately, as the FARC discuss a negotiated settlement, factions have begun to establish alliances with the ELN and some factions are reported to have even pursued the prospect of forming their own organized resistance movements.[107] Critics of Plan Colombia believe, that for all the positive press, this effort has failed. These critiques are discussed in the following section.

Critique of Plan Colombia

Statistics can sometimes serve to support or defend a narrative, and in the case of Plan Colombia there are a tremendous amount of statistics being employed to endorse its viability. The Colombian Ministry of Defense notes that homicides in Colombia have dropped seventy-eight percent, kidnappings have dropped by seventy-three percent, and terrorist attacks have decreased by twenty-eight percent since 2005.[108] Furthermore, in 2015, the unemployment rate in Colombia

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[105] Ramsey, 135.

[106] Stephen Gill, "Colombia Peace Talks Miss Deadline but Not Without Progress," *Colombia Reports*, March 23, 2016, accessed March 27, 2016, http://colombiareports.com/colombia-peace-talks-miss-deadline-but-not-without-progress.

[107] Mimi Yagoub, "Colombia Discovers 'Giant' ELN Cocaine Lab," *InSight Crime* (November 19, 2015), accessed February 25, 2016, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/colombia-discovers-giant-eln-cocaine-lab.

[108] Ministro de Defensa Nacional (Colombian National Minister of Defense), *Logros de la Politica de Defensa y Seguridad Todos por un Nuevo Pais* (Bogota: Grupo de Informacion Estadistica, 2016), 10-37, accessed February 4, 2016, https://www.mindefensa.gov.co/irj/go/km/docs/Mindefensa/Documentos/descargas/estudios%20ssectoriale/info_estadistica/Logros_Sector_Defensa.pdf. Of note, there was a spike in terrorist attacks during 2012 and 2013 which could have been attributed to the period in which the FARC and the GOC began their negotiations for peace. The spike may be attributed to an effort by insurgent groups to gain an advantage during

was at a fifteen-year low of 8.9 percent.[109] Yet, for all the support statistics provide to Plan Colombia, they also highlight its failures.

Critics of Plan Colombia emphasize that the murder rate remains one of the highest in the world, and there are serious concerns over the role of security forces in continued human rights violations. Furthermore, the efforts to eradicate coca production have led to increased economic inequality between those residing in urban areas and those in the rural areas of Colombia. Lastly, for all the efforts to support democracy in Colombia as a way to target the source of illicit narcotics, coca eradication is on the decline and cocaine production is on the rise.[110]

The threat to human security in Colombia remains an issue. The homicide rate, in 2012, remained above thirty per 100,000, which ranks it as one of the worst rates in the world.[111] Further, according to a report by the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in June 2015, there have been 6.5 million persons internally displaced in Colombia.[112] As of January 2015,

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the negotiations. Since 2013, terrorist attacks have dropped by fifty percent.

[109] Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (Colombian National Administrative Department of Statistics), *Mercado Laboral: Principales Resultados Diciembre de 2015* (Bogota: Gobierno de Colombia, 2016), 14, accessed February 17, 2016, http://www. dane.gov.co/files/investigaciones/boletines/ech/ech/pres_web_empleo_resultados_dic_15.pdf.

[110] Acevedo, Bewley-Taylor, and Youngers, 10.

[111] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Global Study on Homicide*, (Vienna: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2013), 22-23, accessed December 16, 2015, https: //www.unodc.org/documents/gsh/pdfs/2014_GLOBAL_HOMICIDE_BOOK_web.pdf. Despite the ongoing conflict in Colombia, the homicide rates are still extremely high. "For example, in 2012, the rates of intentional homicide and of civilian casualties were 6.5 intentional homicide and 9.34 civilian casualty per 100,000 population in Afghanistan, and 8.0 intentional homicide and 10.05 civilian casualty per 100,000 in Iraq, both situations of ongoing conflict."

[112] United Nations High Commission for Refugees, *UNHCR Mid-Year Trends 2015* (Geneva: United Nations, 2015), 16, accessed February 17, 2016, http://www.unhcr.org/ 56701b969.html; United Nations High Commission for Refugees, "Questions and Answers about IDPs," United Nations, accessed March 21, 2016, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IDPersons/ Pages/Issues.aspx. The UNHCR defines internally displaced persons as "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations

Colombia ranked in the top twenty worst countries for internally displaced persons eight times since 2005.[113] Many feel that the high number of internally displaced persons is a direct result of the human rights violations orchestrated by both the Colombian security forces as well as the guerrilla forces they pursue.[114]

Other critics describe how the militarization strategy to combat narco-trafficking and TCOs conjures up memories of political armies that maintained a grip on democracy in many Latin American countries between the 1960s and 1980s. These political armies were instituted to resolve internal strife, but also "took power under the assumption that a war had to be waged against real and perceived internal enemies."[115] Unfortunately, these military regimes failed to achieve lasting peace in their countries, and their tactics often exacerbated the violent nature of the societies they had sworn to protect. Plan Colombia was established to strengthen the Colombian security forces, but for many, the security forces have only exhibited the same characteristics of past political armies. A 2013 report by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on Colombia "praises government policies…but highlights significant deficiencies in their implementation and identifies other severe human rights problems."[116] Most notably, the UNHCR

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of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border."

[113] United Nations High Commission for Refugees, *UNHCR Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2014* (Geneva: United Nations, 2015), 17, accessed February 17, 2016, http://un hcr.org/556725e69.html#_ga=1.129514948.913845802.1455377106.

[114] Acevedo, Bewley-Taylor, and Youngers, 10.

[115] Dirk Kruijt and Kees Koonings, "From Political Armies to the 'War against Crime': The Transformation of Militarism in Latin America," *Militarism and International Relations: Political Economy, Security, Theory,* ed. Anna Stavrianakis and Jan Selby (New York: Routledge, 2013), 93.

[116] Tickner, 6. Arlene Tickner observes that human rights abuses continue in Colombia despite the USG's efforts to vet Colombian security forces. "Among these are continued killings and threats against human rights activists, journalists, and community leaders, and low conviction rates for human rights abuses committed by the security forces, most notably the 'false positives'

highlighted a culture within the Colombian security forces in which denial had not transitioned to a culture of "recognition and response" to prevent future human rights violations.[117]

Amnesty International USA has been extremely critical of Plan Colombia, as they believe that the USG has overlooked GOC and COLMIL human rights violations and has therefore illegally provided financial aid to Colombia.[118] Furthermore, they suggest that the efforts to target cocaine production have been futile at best. In fact, as shown in Figure 2, statistics from the US Office of National Drug Control Policy highlight that eradication is on the decline while cultivation is on the rise.[119]

scandal, involving over 3,000 extrajudicial killings by the armed forces."

[117] UN Human Rights Council, *Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Addendum: Situation of Human Rights in Colombia*, 24 January 2014, A/HRC/25/19/Add.3, 10, accessed February 17, 2016, http://www.refworld.org/docid/533541 8b4.html.

[118] "US Policy in Colombia," Amnesty International USA. Amnesty International USA notes that foreign aid may only be provided to countries who participate in a thorough human rights vetting process as part of the 1996 Leahy amendment.

[119] "Coca in the Andes," US Office of National Drug Control Policy, accessed February 17, 2016, https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/targeting-cocaine-at-the-source.
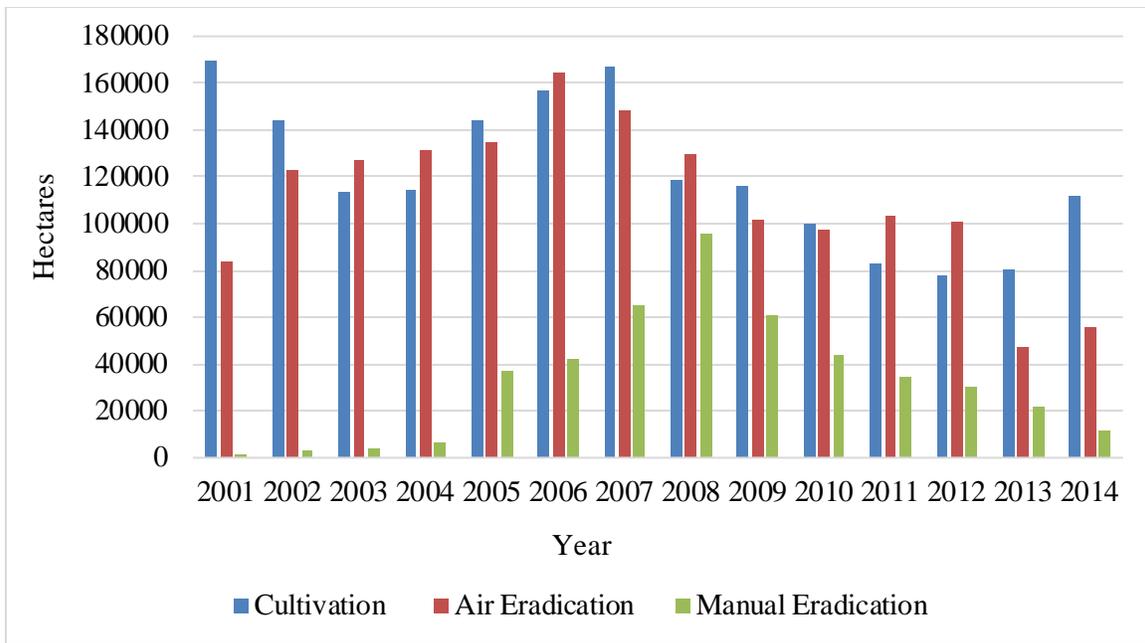
Figure 2. Colombian Coca Cultivation and Eradication Statistics, 2001-2014.

Source: "Coca in the Andes," US Office of National Drug Control Policy, accessed February 17, 2016, https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/targeting-cocaine-at-the-source. Figure 2 was created by the author of the monograph by consolidating statistics from the US Office of National Drug Control Policy.

As a result, Figure 3 highlights the rising trend of cocaine production in Colombia. While statistical data concerning drug production and eradication is not an exact science, there are those that suggest Colombia has regained the crown from Peru as the world's largest cocaine producer.[120] Regardless of whether Colombia has regained the top spot, there is a rising trend in cocaine production since 2012.

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[120] Jeremy McDermott, "Is Colombia Again the World's Top Cocaine Producer?" *InSight Crime*, May 6, 2015, accessed February 17, 2016, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/colombia-again-world-top-cocaine-producer; United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, *Colombia: Monitoreo de Cultivos de Coca 2014* (Vienna: United Nations, 2015), 53, accessed March 5, 2016, http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Colombia/Colombia_ Monitoreo_ de_Cultivos_de_Coca_2014_web.pdf; United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, *Peru: Monitoreo de Cultivos de Coca 2014* (Vienna: United Nations, 2015), 65, accessed March 5, 2016, http://www.unodc.org/documents/peruandecuador//Informes/MonitoreoCoca/Informe_ monitoreo_coca_2014_web.pdf. According to McDermott, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's 2014 reports indicate that Colombia has regained the title of world's top cocaine producer from Peru.
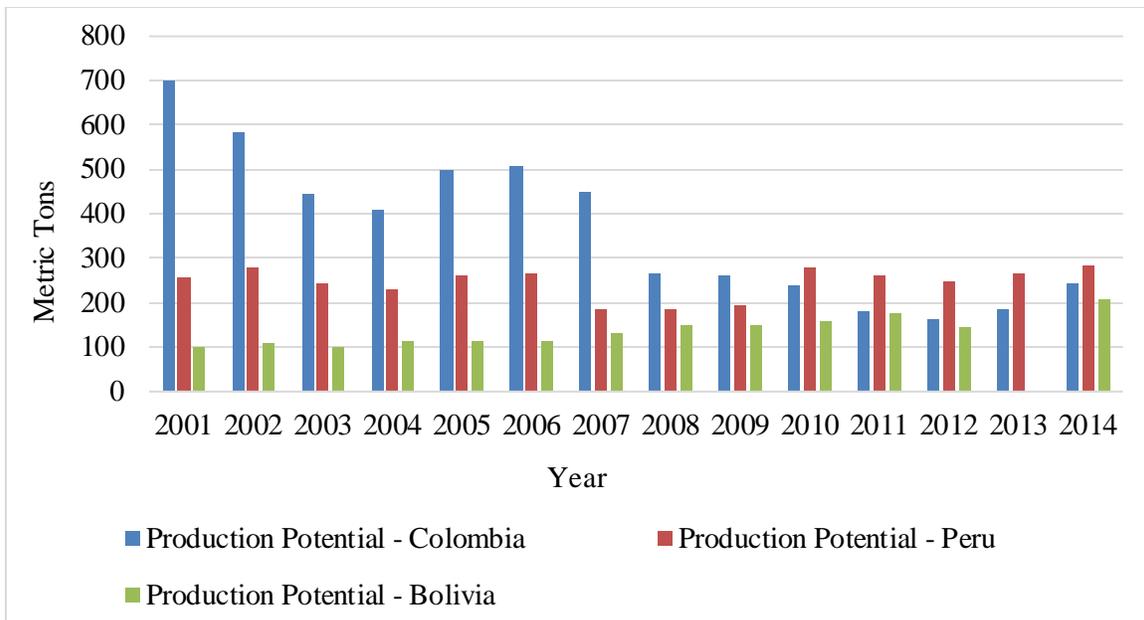
Figure 3. Andean Region Cocaine Production Potential in Metric Tons, 2001-2014.

Source: "Coca in the Andes," US Office of National Drug Control Policy, accessed February 17, 2016, https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/targeting-cocaine-at-the-source. Figure 3 was created by the author of the monograph by consolidating statistics from the US Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Lastly, many critics of Plan Colombia have observed the reduction in power and influence the FARC and the ELN have had on Colombian society. However, they also note that these guerrilla organizations, as well as the narco-traffickers, have simply adapted to the operational environment. Factions within the FARC have decided to break away to form smaller guerrilla organizations focused on trafficking illegal narcotics to support their operations. Furthermore, TCOs still take advantage of the fact that many areas in Colombia continue to be ungoverned due to their remoteness, thereby allowing TCOs to retain safe havens for their operations. Critics have noticed that these new TCOs have also moved into neighboring countries to conduct their business.[121]

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[121] Bruce Bagley, *Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in the Americas: Major Trends in the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2012), 6-11, accessed February 17, 2016, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/BB%20Final.pdf.

Often called the balloon effect or cockroach effect, success against TCOs in one area, or one country, only creates problems in another. While the hierarchial structure of the Medellin and Cali drug cartels presented easy targets for drug enforcement agencies, the fragmentation of the entities operating in Colombia today present new challenges, as the "basic lesson to emerge from Colombia appears to be that smaller criminal networks are less vulnerable to law enforcement and state repression."[122] The cockroaches destroyed in one room today only appear in another room tomorrow.[123]

Even with all the criticism, Plan Colombia has been a successful initiative in some ways, and arguably did increase security within Colombia. Through the USG-supported Plan Colombia Consolidation Phase initiative, Plan Colombia continues to receive support from the USG, and the Colombian security forces continue to show resolve in the face of a complex and difficult adversary. In fact, their prowess in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism over the past fifteen years is coveted by other countries in the region.[124] Overall, one could argue that Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, have been successful because the level of human security in Colombia today far exceeds that of the near-failed state it was in 2000. Plan Colombia, as a Political Warfare approach, incited change and encouraged a cohesive strategy predicated upon cooperation. In the next section, the advantages of Political Warfare in defeating TCOs operating in Colombia is explained; following this explanation lessons for a Political Warfare approach to other TCOs are drawn out.

Political Warfare as a Successful Approach

Despite ongoing skepticism over the effectiveness of Plan Colombia, as of the writing of

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[122] Bagley, 8.

[123] Ibid., 6-11.

[124] Tickner, 2.

this monograph the GOC and the FARC are close to finalizing peace negotiations. These negotiations would not have been possible without a Political Warfare approach enacted by the GOC and the USG. The USG used persuasive diplomacy, coercive diplomacy, shifts in authorities to increase economic aid, security sector assistance, unconventional warfare, and Inform and Influence Activities to prevent the GOC from becoming a narco-state.

Political Warfare, as described by George Kennan in 1948, was the "employment of all the means at a nation's command, short of war, to achieve national objectives."[125] Certainly, George Kennan's operational environment was different from that of today, however the tenets of a whole of government approach remain the same. Max Boot, Senior Fellow in National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, suggests that political warfare is an overt and covert method of perpetrating influence to achieve strategic aims. He argues that the USG too often resorts to 'hard components' to "eliminate leaders of terrorist organizations" rather than attempting to defeat the influence of terrorist organizations through 'soft components'.[126] Political warfare, therefore, is the synchronization of all the instruments of national power to conduct overt and covert action aimed at winning the battle of minds.[127] Though using different names, this aim has been codified in Russia's New Generation Warfare construct, China's Three Warfare's

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[125] Kennan.

[126] Max Boot and Michael Doran, "Policy Innovation Memorandum Number 33: Political Warfare," *Council on Foreign Relations* (June 2013): 1, accessed January 4, 2016, http://www.cfr.org/wars-and-warfare/political-warfare/p30894.

[127] Jãnis Berzins, *Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications For Latvian Defense Policy* (Latvia: National Defence Academy of Latvia Center for Security and Strategic Research, 2014), 5, accessed February 17, 2016, http://www.naa.mil.lv/~/media/NAA/AZPC/Publikacijas/PP%2002-2014.ashx. The Russian New Generation of Warfare is predicated upon Political Warfare. "The Russian view of modern warfare is based on the idea that the main battlespace is the mind and, as a result, new-generation wars are to be dominated by information and psychological warfare…The main objective is to reduce the necessity for deploying hard military power to the minimum necessary, making the opponent's military and civil population support the attacker to the detriment of their own government and country."

construct, as well as the US military's Strategic Landpower construct.[128]

Persuasive Diplomacy

Diplomacy is a strong source of influence and an important pillar in the practice of Political Warfare. Within the diplomatic tool of national power, the USG employs both persuasive diplomacy and coercive diplomacy. The construct of persuasive diplomacy relies on developing bilateral and multilateral agreements focused on defeating threats.[129] The creation of Plan Colombia is an example of persuasive diplomacy from both the USG and the GOC's perspectives.

The USG's strategy in Colombia evolved in the 1980s with the adoption of the National Security Decision Directive 221 which shifted focus towards pursuing the source of illegal narcotics. The US 'War on Drugs' sought to persuade foreign governments to pursue those responsible for producing and trafficking illegal narcotics into the US. The resulting strategic shift in Colombia meant that organizations like the FARC and ELN would no longer be a target for the US, but that the narco-traffickers such as the Medellin and Cali cartels would face the power of the USG. This strategy would remain in place for two decades, thereby allowing the

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[128] Raymond T. Odierno, James F. Amos, and William H. McRaven, *Strategic Landpower: Winning the Clash of Wills*, White Paper, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Officer, 2013), 4, accessed September 19, 2016, http://www.tradoc.army.mil/FrontPageContent /Docs/Strategic%20Landpower%20White%20Paper.pdf. "Inasmuch as humans reside on land and political authority is exercised from within that domain, the actions of other U.S. government agencies to apply political, informational, and economic power against the human objective also occur primarily on land. Therefore, because joint force combat power overmatch is insufficient for achieving strategic success, strategies to accomplish the ten missions in the defense strategic guidance must have human objectives, defined as actions taken to influence people, be they government and military leaders or groups within a population, as their core strategic focus."

[129] USASOC, *Special Operations Forces Support to Political Warfare*, 11. The white paper defines persuasive diplomacy as the practice of "addressing partner or potential partner countries, the US may establish bilateral strategic agreements in the realms of security, economics, and areas of particular concern to the particular country, bolstered by aid targeted to areas that implicitly support Political Warfare efforts."

FARC and ELN time and space in which to reorganize and reorient their efforts at overthrowing the GOC.

National Security Decision Directive 221 sought to develop multilateral and bilateral relationships with foreign governments to conduct CD operations. The policy expanded the role of the US military and US intelligence agencies in the CD efforts.[130] It also funneled millions of dollars in foreign assistance to Colombia as part of the CD campaign, but most in the GOC saw the National Security Decision Directive 221 as a narrow policy that failed to address Colombia's existential threat: the guerrilla forces of the insurgencies. In spite of this, the GOC recognized that by entering into an agreement to pursue the USG's CD strategy they would be entitled to the associated funds, which would help in the pursuit of the guerrillas.[131]

Persuasive diplomacy was difficult for the USG in the 1990s due to a distrust of Colombian President Ernesto Samper, as allegations surfaced that he had accepted bribes from the Cali drug cartel.[132] Furthermore, the CD efforts had yet to curb the illicit drug trade, and reports of human rights violations were restricting the ability to provide foreign assistance to the Colombians under the Leahy laws.[133] Persuasive diplomacy works best when the interests of the actors involved coincide. In the case of Colombia, a distrust of the Samper presidency, corruption, human rights violations, and a mismatch in priorities created an environment in which

[130] Reagan, 6.

[131] Ramsey, 27.

[132] Rabasa and Chalk, 3.

[133] Ramsey, 22; Nina M. Serafino et al., *"Leahy Law" Human Rights Provisions and Security Assistance: Issue Overview* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, January 29, 2014), 1-8, accessed March 21, 2016, https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43361.pdf. In 1998, the US Congress approved amendment 620M to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. The amendment is commonly referred to as the Leahy laws. It stipulates "No assistance shall be furnished under this Act or the Arms Export Control Act to any unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of State has credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights."

persuasive diplomacy was not particularly successful. However, it did serve to maintain a line of communication between the two countries.[134]

In 1998, President Andres Pastrana assumed the presidency of Colombia and developed a comprehensive plan in which the function of persuasive diplomacy was implicit.[135] Under Plan Colombia, President Pastrana sought to develop bilateral and multilateral agreements with the USG and the international community to address the security concerns and in turn capitalize on foreign investment to improve human security in Colombia.[136] The initial draft of Plan Colombia left many US policymakers apprehensive because the initiative sought to introduce vast social reforms in Colombia instead of strictly addressing the narco-trafficking industry. The US Ambassador to Colombia, Ambassador Curtis Warren Kamman, members of the US Country Team, and SOUTHCOM helped provide direction to the GOC in drafting Plan Colombia, which ensured that the initiative garnered support in Washington.[137]

Understanding Washington policymakers' apprehension, Dr. Jamie Ruiz drafted the Plan Colombia initiative and ensured great care was taken to explain the role drug production and narco-trafficking had on the security situation in Colombia.[138] By addressing this issue at great

[134] Ramsey, 21.

[135] Ibid., 56. It is important in the scheme of cooperation and persuasive diplomacy to give credit to the GOC for developing the initiative. However, it must be mentioned that while Dr. Jamie Ruiz, a senior advisor to President Pastrana, is the author of Plan Colombia, many believe that the input of US Ambassador Kamman, General Wilhelm, commander of SOUTHCOM, and General Fernando Tapias, commander of the Colombian Armed Forces, had the most impact on codifying what actions would be taken as part of Plan Colombia. Their input is considered by many to have laid the ground work for approval by policymakers in Washington.

[136] Rabasa and Chalk, 61.

[137] Curtis Warren Kamman, "Colombia: What are we Getting Into?" (lecture presented at the Secretary of State's Open Forum, Washington, DC, November 1, 1999), accessed March 21, 2016, http://bogota.usembassy.gov/plancolombiaspeeches3.html.

[138] Andres Pastrana, "Plan Colombia: Plan for Peace, Prosperity, and Strengthening the State." Office of the Presidency, Government of Colombia, October 1999, 2, accessed September

length, the drafted Plan ensured that the USG would recognize President Pastrana's commitment to the USG's 'War on Drugs'. Most important, however, was the language Dr. Ruiz used to highlight the need for international assistance in combatting the security situation in Colombia. "The solution will never come from finger-pointing by either producer or consumer countries. Our own national efforts will not be enough unless they are part of a truly international alliance against illegal drugs."[139] The language of Plan Colombia demonstrated the need to develop bilateral and multilateral agreements.

In sum, persuasive diplomacy seeks to develop diplomatic cooperation which transforms into a common understanding of the operational environment. The common understanding allows actors to set the stage for future military engagement as part of Political Warfare. However, persuasive diplomacy alone will likely not defeat TCOs. Therefore, in the next section, this monograph will examine how coercive diplomacy efforts complemented these persuasive diplomacy efforts in order to establish a coherent strategy for the USG and GOC to target the security concerns in Colombia. Where persuasive diplomacy seeks to target and consolidate alliances, coercive diplomacy seeks to compel adversaries through the use of a credible threat that they cannot overcome.[140]

Coercive Diplomacy

In his book, *Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War*,

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14, 2015, http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements /plan_colombia_101999.pdf. Plan Colombia notes, "All this has been fed and aggravated by the enormous destabilizing effects of drug trafficking, which, with vast economic resources, has constantly generated indiscriminate violence while undermining our values, on a scale comparable only to the era of Prohibition in the United States."

[139] Pastrana, 3.

[140] Alexander L. George, *Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1991), 83.

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Alexander George defined coercive diplomacy as a "general idea…to back one's demand on an adversary with a threat of punishment for noncompliance that he will consider credible and potent enough to persuade him to comply with the demand."[141] The theory of coercive diplomacy focuses on presenting other actors with a dilemma which forces a cessation of their activities, without the necessity for pummeling them into acquiescence. The goal of coercive diplomacy is to allow the practitioner to achieve their strategic aims without having to escalate out of the gray zone and into the hostilities phase.[142]

The relationship between the Clinton administration and the Santos administration was tumultuous due to deep distrust as well as divergent strategies regarding what the real threat was within Colombia. For the Colombians, their greatest threat came from the perpetrators of violence in the country. For the USG, the greatest threat to US national security was the narco-traffickers. As a method to coerce the Santos administration into improving their CD efforts, President Clinton decertified Colombia in 1996 and 1997 under the Foreign Assistance Act, thereby suspending military aid to the country.[143] Using the metaphor of the carrot and the stick, the suspension of aid in 1996 and 1997 can be seen as the stick, while in 1998, President Clinton used the carrot when he issued a waiver in the hopes that the newly elected President Pastrana would seek to devise a policy in concert with the USG's 'War on Drugs'. The coercive diplomacy used during this timeframe centered on using economic aid to force another actor to commit to a path

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[141] George, 4.

[142] Ibid., 6.

[143] United States General Accounting Office, *Drug Control: Narcotics Threat from Colombia Continues to Grow* (Washington, DC: United States Government Accounting Office, 1999), GAO/NSIAD-99-136, 3-4, accessed January 14, 2016, http://www.gao.gov/archive/1999/ns99136.pdf. Section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (22 U.S.C. 2291j), notes that the President must certify every country that is receiving aid has taken appropriate CD steps in accordance with the 1988 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

that supported USG policies.

While the USG approved support for Plan Colombia in 2000, there were still significant restrictions placed on the foreign assistance. The Leahy amendment sought to ensure that the USG monitored the GOC's security forces, specifically with regards to human rights violations.[144] Additionally, while Plan Colombia, as envisioned by the GOC, was initially meant to address human security in the form of 'soft components' such as economic growth and democratic progress, the USG earmarked a majority of their economic aid to the military. Efforts by the USG to control the distribution of economic aid demonstrated coercive diplomacy by forcing the GOC to expend the resources in accordance with the USG's CD strategy.[145]

After the terrorist attacks in New York City, on September 11, 2001, the USG eased many of the restrictions on Plan Colombia, which allowed counterterrorism funds to support operations in Colombia. The supplemental counterterrorism bill associated with National Security Presidential Decision/Presidential Decision Directive 18 allowed expanded authorities that permitted USG entities to target the sources of terrorism in Colombia as vigorously as they were addressing narco-traffickers. The shift recognized the linkage between narco-trafficking and terrorism.[146]

Following the expansion of authorities, the US Department of State classified the United Self Defense Groups of Colombia, better known as the AUC, as a foreign terrorist group.[147] The classification was important because it meant that the USG was going to pursue the FARC, ELN,

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[144] Callaway and Matthews, 125.

[145] Ibid., 126.

[146] Mack.

[147] US Department of State, Bureau of Counterterrorism, *Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations* (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2016), accessed January 4, 2016, http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm. The US Department of State delisted the AUC as a terrorist organization on July 15, 2014.

and AUC paramilitary groups under the umbrella of terrorism. Furthermore, the classification demonstrated to the adversary that the GOC and USG would expend significant resources to destroy their organizations.

Upon his election to office in 2002, President Álvaro Uribe-Velez introduced the DSDP, which provided the GOC a focused strategy aimed at securing the sovereign borders of Colombia from rampant violence, while also developing human security through a whole of government approach.[148] The DSDP stressed that "strengthening of the rule of law [was] the essential prerequisite to achieving the aim of Democratic Security: the protection of each and every citizen."[149] However, a fundamental prerequisite to the effective rule of law is the extermination of rampant corruption. Consequently, it was essential that the policy focus on eradicating corrupt practices. The policy promised to base itself on "the principles of efficiency, transparency and economy, to ensure that every peso spent contributes to security."[150] Moreover, the policy sought to establish a culture of hope and trust between the citizens of Colombia and their public officials.

Coercive diplomacy was difficult to practice by the GOC during this timeframe because their adversary, the guerrilla forces of the insurgencies, were able to consistently manipulate actors within the GOC through corruption practices. Nevertheless, and despite this difficulty, both President Pastrana and President Uribe did practice coercive diplomacy with the FARC. They both threatened to introduce the full power of the Colombian security forces under the assistance of the USG unless the FARC, ELN, and AUC adhered to the parameters of the peace negotiations. While the AUC succumbed to this form of coercive diplomacy and disbanded, the

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[148] Alvaro Uribe, Democratic Security and Defense Policy (Bogota: Presidency of the Republic of Colombia, 2003), 12, accessed November 5, 2015, https://www.mindefensa.gov.co /irj/go/km/docs/Mindefensa/Documentos/descargas/Documentos_Home/Seguridad%20Democrati ca.pdf.

[149] Ibid., 12.

[150] Ibid., 18.

FARC and ELN continued to fight, thereby eliciting the credible threat. On January 10, 2001, despite nearly two years of peace negotiations, President Pastrana called off the negotiations with the FARC and sought to capture the *zona de despeje* from the insurgents and their guerrilla forces.[151] Similarly, President Uribe's DSDP consistently sought to secure the country by relentlessly pursuing the FARC and ELN.

Coercive diplomacy focuses on forcing another actor to undertake or cease specific activities.[152] The USG forced the GOC to address not only the security situation but also corrupt practices in Colombia. Certainly, the GOC employed incredible efforts to shift the security situation in Colombia, however, without the urging of financial assistance through diplomatic measures, the GOC might have continued to accept the corruption and violence which plagued their country. The USG threatened the GOC with noncompliance, and Plan Colombia as well as the DSDP were developed as a result of this threat. As seen in the next section, such economic aid feeds into persuasive and coercive diplomacy and is thus very much a part of Political Warfare.

Economic Aid

In the Political Warfare construct, economic aid serves as another powerful pillar with which to build partner capacity and address root causes of social instability. In 2000, the USG approved a significant increase in spending to support Plan Colombia and its subsequent iniatives. Between 2000 and 2002, the USG provided $1.7 billion dollars in aid to Colombia. During that time frame, the preponderance of money was earmarked for CD programs.[153] From 2003 to 2008,

[151] Ramsey, 76.

[152] USASOC, *Special Operations Forces Support to Political Warfare*, 13. The Special Operations Forces Support to Political Warfare construct highlights the difference between deterrence, which is preventative in nature, and coercive diplomacy, which seeks to "provide political leaders an alternative to war."

[153] United States General Accounting Office, *Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; US Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance,*

the USG provided approximately $4.3 billion dollars in aid, however, the distribution of money was balanced more towards improving human security than strictly combatting narcotics.[154] An even greater shift towards social and economic programs occurred between 2009 and 2016.[155]

Dollars in Millions	2000-2002	2003-2008	2009-2016
Social and Economic Programs	$190.4	$841.4	$1,375
Promote Rule of Law	$137.8	$101	$195
Counternarcotics and Security Forces	$1,446.5	$3,413	$2,291
TOTAL	$1,774.7	$4,355.4	$3,861

Table 1. US Foreign Assistance to Colombia, 2000-2016 (Dollars in Millions).

Source: "Colombia" Center for International Policy, accessed January 4, 2016, http://security assistance.org/colombia; United States General Accounting Office, *Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; US Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance,* Report to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, US Senate (Washington, DC: United States Government Accounting Office, 2008) GAO-09-71, 15, accessed January 23, 2016, http://www.gao.gov/assets/290/282511.pdf. The table was created by the author of the monograph.

Table 1, above, demonstrates the shift in focus towards an economic package focused on developing a whole of government approach to combat the security situation as part of Political Warfare.

Since 2000, the USG has supported Plan Colombia and its subsequent initiatives with approximately $10 billion. According to General Wilhelm, the shift towards funding the 'soft components' of Plan Colombia should have been the initial focus of funding lines.[156] Given the

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Report to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, US Senate (Washington, DC: United States Government Accounting Office, 2008) GAO-09-71, 15, accessed January 23, 2016, http://www.gao.gov/assets/290/282511.pdf.

[154] United States General Accounting Office, *Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved; US Agencies Need More Detailed Plans for Reducing Assistance,* 15.

[155] "Colombia" Center for International Policy, accessed January 4, 2016, http://security assistance.org/colombia.

[156] Charles E. Wilhelm, "A View from Washington," *Plan Colombia: Some Differing Perspectives*, ed. Gabriel Marcella, Charles E. Wilhelm, Alvaro Valencia Tovar, Ricardo Arias Calderon, and Chris Marquis (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, 2001), 9. General

USG's initial interest in Plan Colombia remaining centered on a CD strategy, it is easy to see why most of the funds originally sought to support the 'hard components' of the initiative.[157] With that being said, the tremendous amount of money provided to support Plan Colombia came with restrictions on its use. This was the USG's way of employing economic aid to encourage the GOC to follow its wishes.

The US Congress was apprehensive about giving money to organizations within the GOC who were accused of perpetrating the human rights violations.[158] Specific units within the COLMIL and CNP were the focus of financial support. This was done in order to ensure that the receiving units had been properly vetted by the Leahy amendment. The power of economic aid provided by the USG for Plan Colombia enticed the GOC to enact military reforms intended to dismiss military personnel who were "suspected of violating human rights or colluding with paramilitaries."[159] In the end, the economic contributions of the USG helped ensure Plan Colombia led to "restoring order and security – a basic prerequisite for the strengthening of civil liberties and human rights."[160] Additionally, it ensured that the money was earmarked to address the USG's national security concerns by continuing to pursue the 'War on Drugs'.

Economic aid may transition into economic coercion if the actor providing the aid does not approve of the way in which the aid is being dispensed. Within Political Warfare, the policymaker may use sanctions as a tool of economic coercion to set the conditions for another actor to perform in a way which aligns with the wishes of the actor providing the funds. The use

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Wilhelm defined the 'soft components' as the "peace process, alternative development, social participation, human development, economic assistance, and fiscal and judicial reform."

[157] Wilhelm, 9. General Wilhelm defined hard components as the "counterdrug measures and military reform."

[158] Callaway and Matthews, 127.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Uribe, 5.

of economic aid and economic coercion may certainly demonstrate a credible threat in support of persuasive and coercive diplomacy. Unfortunately, in the gray zone, oftentimes military force, as well as economic coercion, is required to influence human affairs. In the next section, the role of the military will be examined to demonstrate its power of influence.

Security Sector Assistance

Special warfare campaigns, which support the majority of Political Warfare campaigns, are inherently whole of government endeavors. As part of a Political Warfare approach, special warfare campaigns are primarily fought at the tactical level by focusing on engaging with the host nation forces. "Special warfare campaigns are characterized by operations in which the local partner provides the main effort."[161] The special operations community provides the face-to-face interaction with the host nation forces on the ground, thereby gaining valuable intelligence to support the Political Warfare campaign being waged at the strategic level. There is an intrinsic risk associated with these types of missions to include "unacceptable partner behavior."[162] With that said, however, the US military's role in support of Political Warfare campaigns must not fall solely in the realm of the special operations community, but rather must be shared appropriately throughout the spectrum of US military capability.[163]

The security sector involves the organizations and institutions that enforce the rule of law, which includes the forces and authorities that protect the "populace, resources, territory, and common interests."[164] According to the UN Secretary General, the security sector is "a broad

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[161] Dan Madden et al., *Special Warfare: The Missing Middle in U.S. Coercive Options* (Washington, DC: RAND, 2014), 3, accessed January 7, 2016, http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR828.html.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Ibid., 1-4.

[164] USASOC, *Special Operations Forces Support to Political Warfare*, 15.

term used to describe the structures, institutions and personnel responsible for the management, provision, and oversight of security in a country." [165] Under the DSDP, President Uribe sought to improve the capabilities of the Colombian security forces as well as to curb the corruption practices which had ostracized the GOC from the people of Colombia. As a result, the USG introduced measures to assess the credibility of both the Colombian security forces and institutions charged with preserving the rule of law within Colombia.

Plan Colombia, as introduced by President Pastrana, was received with a bit of consternation by the USG. The allegations of human rights violations by the paramilitaries and guerrillas as well as the COLMIL presented an operational environment which created significant political concern for the USG. Ramsey notes, "In 1998, Colombia reportedly had the worst human rights record in the [western] hemisphere." [166] The USG did not want to support an actor who was committing human rights violations. Therefore, the USG instituted a vetting process to assesss the capabilities of the institutions operating in Colombia.

For some, US involvement in Plan Colombia was the result of "intervention by invitation." [167] However, the US special operations community had been active in Colombia since 1959 when US President Dwight D. Eisenhower sent a small team of operators to assess the operational environment. [168] Their report helped to facilitate the Commander of the US Army Special Warfare Center, Brigadier General William Yarborough, as he and another small team

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[165] United Nations Security Sector Reform Unit, *The United Nations SSR Perspective* (Washington, DC: United Nations, 2012), 2, accessed November 15, 2016, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/publications/ssr/ssr_perspective_2012.pdf.

[166] Ramsey, 21.

[167] Tickner, 2.

[168] Chelsey Dyer, "50 Years of US Intervention in Colombia," *Colombia Reports*, October 4, 2013, accessed March 21, 2016, http://colombiareports.com/50-years-us-intervention-colombia/.

traveled to Colombia in 1962.[169] Following Brigadier General Richard Stilwell's assessment of

Army Activities in Underdeveloped Areas Short of War, Brigadier General Yarborough returned

to Colombia and assisted in instituting Plan *Lazo,* a Colombian initiative started in 1962 that was

meant to target guerrilla forces such as the FARC and ELN.[170] Thus, the US military has had a

long lasting relationship with the COLMIL and CNP. In all of these instances, the role of the US

military in Colombia was one of advising and assisting.

Plan Colombia was not an intervention by invitation, rather it was an evolution of

ongoing engagements in Colombia. Even so, the cooperation amongst the COLMIL, CNP, and

US military advisors required some adjustment on both sides with the inception of Plan

Colombia. Eventually, however, they were able to resolve the communication differences and

varied perspectives to formulate a cohesive effort.[171] Furthermore, the COLMIL and CNP

recognized the importance of the human rights vetting and sought to improve the

professionalization of their forces.[172]

Under the construct of security sector reform, the USG worked with the GOC to assess its

capability to pursue and prosecute threats to the national security of Colombia.[173] As a

compliment to the security sector reform, Political Warfare requires building partner capacity as

well as conducting Foreign Internal Defense. These complimentary missions serve to develop a

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[169] Dyer.

[170] Andrew J. Birtle, *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1942-1976* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2006), 299-300.

[171] Ramsey, 116.

[172] Ibid.

[173] United Nations Security Sector Reform Unit, 2. The United Nations defines security sector reform as "a process of assessment, review and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of the security sector, led by national authorities, and that has as its goal the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples, without discrimination and with full respect of human rights and the rule of law."

capable and competent force able to pursue and prosecute security threats under internationally

recognized rules of law. Military reform was and is the most visible indicator in the

professionalization of the COLMIL. While the military had begun taking the steps necessary to

implement reforms under President Pastrana's administration, a clear lack of leadership was

missing until the arrival of President Uribe in 2002.[174] President Uribe ushered in a mantra that

Colombia was determined to establish a secure environment ripe for economic development.

       With regards to building partner capacity, US military forces developed the capacity and

capability of the CNP and COLMIL through a focused Foreign Internal Defense campaign.

Initially, Foreign Internal Defense operations were met with resistance due to misplaced pride

between US advisors and Colombian security forces.[175] This resistance was predicated by the fact

that US advisors were narrowly focused on CD operations whereas Colombian security forces

were focused on combatting guerrillas, paramilitaries, and narco-traffickers. As the US strategy in

Colombia expanded to focus on promoting democracy, the US military developed a common

understanding with the GOC and Colombian security forces predicated on defeating the

guerrillas, paramilitaries, and narco-traffickers. The DSDP addressed the lack of security caused

largely by corruption and reminded the citizens that security was everyone's responsibility, not

only the state's.[176]

       The Colombian security forces' capacity and capabilities have since increased to a point

where they are intimately involved in providing training and assistance to other "countries in

Central America, the Caribbean, and to nations beyond the Western Hemisphere affected by

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[174] Ramsey, 152.

[175] Ibid., 116. "One senior Colombia official put it, 'Arrogance ran both ways.'" The sentiments of the US military were focused on conducting operations as they saw fit, while the Colombian security forces did not want a foreign entity coming into their country telling them how to wage the war they had been fighting for over fifty years.

[176] Uribe, 7.

drug-related crime and violence."[177] The security sector assistance pillar of Political Warfare as executed during Plan Colombia was instrumental in improving the security situation in Colombia. With expanded authorities, the US instruments of national power were able to prevent Colombia from becoming a failed state. The combination of security sector reform, Foreign Internal Defense, and building partner capacity developed a legitimate security force in the country which forced the guerrillas, paramilitaries, and narco-traffickers out of populated areas where they could be pursued. The ensuing pursuit placed the guerrillas, paramilitaries, and narco-traffickers in a weakened position from which they began to capitulate and start the long negotiations for peace.[178]

Unconventional Warfare and Inform and Influence Activities

The last two pillars of Political Warfare encompass the practice of Unconventional Warfare and Inform and Influence Activities. Where Unconventional Warfare aids actors seeking to subvert and oppose a "governing regime or occupying power" through nonviolent resistance or armed resistance, Counter-Unconventional Warfare seeks to defeat the subversive activities of a state, sub-state, or non-state actor.[179] These types of operations are inherently "protracted and psychologically-centric in nature."[180] Critical to their success is the synchronized execution of Inform and Influence Activities to dominate the strategic communication being executed in the

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[177] Tickner, 1-2. Arlene Tickner notes, "One of [Colombia's] main exportable assets is its security forces, widely considered to be among the world's most seasoned in counternarcotics and counterinsurgency, in no small measure due to prolonged U.S. training."

[178] Sibylla Brodzinsky, "FARC peace talks: Colombia nears historic deal after agreement on justice and reparations" The Guardian, September 23, 2015, accessed October 21, 2016, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/24/farc-peace-talks-colombia-nears-historic-deal-after-agreement-on-justice-and-reparations. The FARC and the GOC have agreed to sign a final peace accord by March 2016.

[179] USASOC, *Special Operations Forces Support to Political Warfare*, 18-19.

[180] Ibid., 20.

gray zone.[181]

During Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, all the instruments of US national power collaborated in a focused Counter-Unconventional Warfare campaign wrought with Inform and Influence Activities. Perception was a critical aspect of the Inform and Influence Activities, as the guerrillas, paramilitaries, and narco-traffickers had seized the initiative in the late 1990s by suggesting that the GOC was corrupt and unable to provide the essential services to the people of Colombia. Further exacerbating the strategic messaging within the gray zone in the early stages of Plan Colombia were the divergent strategies of the USG and GOC. Once the USG recognized the nexus between narco-traffickers and terrorism, the GOC and USG were able to develop a coordinated strategy to pursue the purveyors of violence in Colombia. With a coherent strategy, the USG was able to emphasize strategic messaging on the importance of human rights, and the GOC was able to highlight how a professionalized security force could provide human security to the citizens of Colombia while also pursuing those attempting to disrupt the process of peace. The various US Ambassadors to Colombia stood beside the GOC throughout this timeframe as support to the Inform and Influence Activities. Their overt collaboration with the GOC demonstrated legitimacy to the citizens of Colombia and the international community.[182]

The Counter-Unconventional Warfare and Inform and Influence Activities lines of effort during Plan Colombia and its subsequent initiatives as executed by the GOC and the USG continues with the Colombia Strategic Development Initiative that focuses on bridging the gap between the rural local populace and the GOC. The initiative seeks to expand the alternative

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[181] Field Manual (FM) 3-13, *Inform and Influence Activities* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013), 1-1. FM 3-13 defines Inform and Influence Activities as "the integration of designated information-related capabilities in order to synchronize themes, messages, and actions with operations to inform United States and global audiences, influence foreign audiences, and affect adversary and enemy decisionmaking."

[182] Ramsey, 97-98.

development projects into the rural areas of Colombia as part of the National Consolidation Plan. This plan was developed to demonstrate to the people of Colombia, and the world, that the GOC has consolidated the gains from Plan Colombia and is in the lead regarding the advancement of security and CD efforts while also improving human security for the people of Colombia. This initiative provides a message of stability as it seeks to solidify the ongoing peace negotiations with the FARC while also deterring other TCOs in the region.[183]

Coordinated and coherent Counter-Unconventional Warfare efforts and Inform and Influence Activities seek to establish a dominating influence in the operating environment. For many, Political Warfare is a "population-centric engagement that seeks to influence, to persuade, even to co-opt."[184] As part of Political Warfare, the Counter-Unconventional Warfare construct combines a tailorable package of core activities such as Unconventional Warfare, Foreign Internal Defense, Counterinsurgency, Stability Operations, and Counterterrorism to legitimize and empower a partner. The Inform and Influence Activities construct energizes the Counter-Unconventional Warfare construct by establishing conditions for the core activities to function as well as capitalizing on the successful prosecution of Counter-Unconventional Warfare. Both constructs are focused on winning in the gray zone.[185] In sum, then, Political Warfare offers a

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[183] US Department of State, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, *State Department Fact Sheet on Colombia Strategic Development Initiative* (Washington, DC: US Department of State, April 12, 2012), accessed January 15, 2016, http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/text trans/2012/04/201204123775.html#axzz41Twjky1g.

[184] Joseph L. Votel et al., "Unconventional Warfare in the Gray Zone," *Joint Force Quarterly* 80, (1st Quarter 2016): 102, accessed March 1, 2016, http://ndupress.ndu.edu/Portals /68/Documents/jfq/jfq-80/jfq-80_101-109_Votel-et-al.pdf.

[185] Ibid., 108. For General Votel, Commander, United States Special Operations Command, "a Gray Zone "win" is not a win in the classic warfare sense. Winning is perhaps better described as maintaining the U.S. Government's positional advantage, namely the ability to influence partners, populations, and threats toward achievement of our regional or strategic objectives. Specifically, this will mean retaining decision space, maximizing desirable strategic options, or simply denying an adversary a decisive positional advantage."

number of complimentary tools to influence outcomes. The next section, explores how the lessons learned from Plan Colombia will likely empower the practice of Political Warfare in other operational environments.

Recommendations

Political Warfare is inherently a whole of government effort because the gray zone demands actors confront an ambiguous operational environment. Plan Colombia demonstrated that, in order to be effective, a coherent strategy must be devised and shaped by a centralized office in order to ensure all the instruments of national power are employed appropriately and that they do not interfere with one another. Furthermore, Plan Colombia highlighted how a militarized strategy of defeating TCOs on its own can be counterproductive if it limits the ability of foreign assistance to address the root causes that originally allowed TCOs to gain time and space in which to operate. Lastly, Plan Colombia underscores the importance of cooperation with a foreign entity. For the past sixteen years, the USG and the GOC have stumbled and staggered to develop a secure and economically viable Colombia. Clearly, in Colombia, the approach needed was a broader whole of government one, employing all the instruments of national power working in close coordination with the host nation. The lessons learned from this time period can inform similar efforts in the future. This monograph argues that efforts to coordinate the instruments of national power would be more effective if directed by a Political Warfare directorate which reports to the US Department of State.

Unity of effort has always been a difficult measure to achieve in large operations which require input and output from a range of organizations. Leveraging Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational capabilities across the diplomatic, informational, military and economic arenas requires a clear organizational design to achieve unity of effort and synchronization. While the doctrine exists, specifically Joint Publication 3-08, Interorganizational

Coordination during Joint Operations, collaboration remains a tension.[186]

George Kennan's 1948 Policy and Planning Memorandum sought to develop a construct to help plan and guide Political Warfare campaigns. The crux of his construct was that the US Department of State should develop an office for covert political warfare operations whose directorate reported to the Secretary of State. Furthermore, the directorate would be composed of equal parts from the US Department of State and the Department of Defense.[187] As the strategic Political Warfare lead, the US Department of State would be the clearing house for synchronizing national strategic objectives. In certain countries, the Country Team would take the lead in coordinating and synchronizing these efforts. Plan Colombia demonstrated how the US Ambassador to Colombia sequenced the diplomatic, informational, military, and economic efforts at the operational level. At the direction of the Ambassador, the Country Team works closely with the SOUTHCOM Joint Interagency Coordination Group to ensure diplomatic, developmental, and defense efforts are executed in concert.[188]

In other instances, where the threat crosses geographic lines, the US Department of State's Regional Bureaus could assume responsibility for designing, developing and directing Political Warfare approaches. There is an inherent cooperative effort between an Ambassador and the Geographic Combatant Command at the operational level, however for initiatives focused on a more regional threat, the Geographic Combatant Command will be responsible for interacting with the US Department of State's Regional Bureaus as well as the requisite individual

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[186] JP 3-08, IV-18.

[187] Kennan. "There should promptly be established, under the cover of the National Security Council Secretariat, a directorate of political warfare operations to be known as the Consultative (or Evaluation) Board of the National Security Council. The Director should be designated by the Secretary of State and should be responsible to him."

[188] United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), *Counter-Unconventional Warfare*, White Paper, (Fort Bragg: USASOC, 2014), 14, accessed September 23, 2015, https://info.publicintelligence.net/USASOC-CounterUnconventionalWarfare.pdf.

Ambassadors.[189] This operational concept builds upon National Security Presidential Directive 44, which directs the US Department of State to adopt a more robust direction over interagency collaboration.[190]

This is not an entirely new approach. The Chinese Communist Party developed the same type of directorate to advance their Political Warfare efforts. While the directorate reports directly to the People's Liberation Army, it still seeks to accomplish the same tasks. The People's Liberation Army General Political Department Liaison Department attempts to leverage "traditional state diplomacy and formal military-to-military relations" to influence external actors.[191]

The demand for a Political Warfare coordinator was noted by George Kennan in 1948 and has gained increased contemporary support from individuals such as Max Boot and General Joseph Votel.[192] Adopting a Political Warfare coordinator will require policymakers and strategic planners to educate themselves on the capabilities at their disposal. There have been an enormous amount of publications written about how US Special Operations Forces cannot be everywhere, and therefore the general purpose military forces, as well as other instruments of national power,

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[189] USASOC, *Counter-Unconventional Warfare*, 14; JP 1, xvi-xvii. Geographic Combatant Commanders are "assigned a geographic area of responsibility by the President with the advice of [the Secretary of Defense]." There are six Geographic Combatant Commanders in the US Department of Defense serving as commanders of US Central Command, US European Command, US Pacific Command, US Southern Command, US Africa Command, and US Northern Command respectively.

[190] George W. Bush, National Security Presidential Directive 44, "Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization" (December 7, 2005), 1, accessed November 15, 2015, http://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-44.html.

[191] Mark Stokes and Russel Hsiao, *The People's Liberation Army General Political Department Political Warfare with Chinese Characteristics* (Arlington: Project 2049 Institute, 2013), 3, accessed February 16, 2016, http://www.project2049.net/documents/PLA_General _Political_Department_Liaison_Stokes_Hsiao.pdf.

[192] Boot and Doran, 2; Votel et al., 108.

need to be leveraged in a more strategic way to impact and shape environments in the gray zone.[193] While the US Army Special Forces Groups maintain and exercise supreme regional expertise as they practice special warfare, these Groups remain a small force. The tyranny of space will always create areas for TCOs to exploit, however, the Plan Colombia case study illustrates how the military, in combination with the other instruments of national power, can expand its ability to provide security cooperation in support of theater strategies. Due to the ongoing requirements for military personnel and the size limitations of Special Forces Groups, the general purpose military forces must be better incorporated into efforts in the gray zone.

The history of Plan Colombia also highlights that combatting TCOs requires more than just a militarized approach. In November 2014, Guatemala's Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a forum with representatives from the Woodrow Wilson Center and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission to discuss new approaches to drug law enforcement and countering organized crime. During the discussion, they highlighted a number of uniform challenges facing states. Among the challenges were weak institutional presence, the complex relationship between violence and drug markets, and the institutional loss of legitimacy in regions where the local populace has in turn become dependent upon illegal markets. Oftentimes, these types of operational environments invite an overly aggressive militarized response which only serves to exacerbate the situation.[194]

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[193] Michele Malvesti, "Working with the Interagency, IGOs/NGOs, and Other Global Partners to Build Regional Security" (panel member, 40th Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis (IFPA)-Fletcher Conference, Washington, DC, June 5, 2013), accessed January 4, 2016, http://ifp afletcherconference.com/2013/transcripts/trans-malvesti.pdf. Dr. Malvesti notes that certain policymakers, departments and agencies within the USG either underestimate or overestimate the capabilities of US special operations forces. The chasm of understanding only serves to prevent the USG from properly employing all the instruments of national power.

[194] Juan Carlos Garzón, Maribel Carrera, and Eric Olson, *New Approaches to Drug Law Enforcement and Responses to Organized Crime*, Report on the Side Event to the 56th Regular Session of CICAD (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center, 2014), 1-3, accessed March 5, 2016, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/CICAD%20Ingles%20FINAL.pdf.

In the late 1990s, human rights violations in Colombia were the worst in the western hemisphere.[195] Numerous factors accounted for the violence in Colombia, however, many equate the violence to the lack of a legitimate Leviathan state.[196] This security vacuum led the local populace to seek security from varying entities, among them the guerrillas and narco-traffickers. In response to the troubling security situation, the GOC sought to employ military force to reoccupy areas of the country.[197] The USG funneled hundreds of millions of dollars into Colombia to support the militarized strategy. The overly militarized strategy served to demonstrate the GOC's resolve but it also provoked an emotional backlash against the perceived militarization of the Colombian state.

An overly militarized strategy only serves to exacerbate emotional scars in the post-hostilities and settlement phases of the gray zone thus sowing the seeds for the next dispute. General Wilhelm, Commander of SOUTHCOM from 1997 to 2000, noted that far too much attention was paid to the 'hard components' and in fact, in 2001, he remarked, "Plan Colombia is not a $1.313 billion military strategy with a small social component—it is a $7.513 billion peace strategy with a subordinate counterdrug component."[198] Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, are still trying to capitalize on the security gains they made, but the program will not be successful until the GOC effectively cultivates alternative development programs fostered by civilian-led local government entities in the rural regions of Colombia.[199] That being said, the

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[195] Ramsey, 21.

[196] Rochlin, 26.

[197] Kruijt and Koonings, 99.

[198] Wilhelm, "A View from Washington," 9.

[199] United States Office of National Drug Control Policy, "Coca in the Andes." The US Office of National Drug Control Policy notes, "The most effective way of reducing the production of illicit drugs is through the expansion of governance into marginalized areas so that all citizens can have access to government services, protection from terrorist or criminal groups and a licit manner in which to earn a living."

Political Warfare construct allowed the USG to recognize the importance of alternative development as seen in the shift from funding a preponderance of 'hard components' to a preponderance of 'soft components'.

Finally, Plan Colombia epitomizes cooperation. Initiatives like Plan Colombia would not be successful except for the cooperation amongst the parties involved. Certainly, within Political Warfare there may be a time in which diplomatic coercion and economic coercion are required but in the end, understanding the needs of both parties promotes cooperation. This cannot occur if the parties involved are not willing to work together. Plan Colombia would not have been supported had it not been for the interaction between Dr. Ruiz, Colombian President Pastrana, General Wilhelm, and the US Country Team.

While a majority of the military activities executed in the gray zone are core activities of the special operations community, the most important military activities in the gray zone are military engagement and security cooperation. The forum which hosted Guatemala's Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented a number of suggestions to assist in countering organized crime. Among them were efforts to curb corruption, develop a state's capacity to improve the rule of law, establish a presence in territories to reestablish trust with the local populace, and "transition from a 'war' mindset to a citizen-centered security mindset."[200] These activities only occur if the actors involved cooperate with one another.

The security sector reform conducted in Colombia sought to legitimize the Colombian security forces. Certainly, there was friction between the actors, but once all parties involved understood the operational environment, changes began to occur. The military engagement and security cooperation was successful because the personalities involved in the process recognized the seriousness of the situation and made significant efforts to curb corruption, improve the rule of law, reestablish trust with the local populace, and focus efforts towards a citizen-centered

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[200] Garzón, Carrera, and Olson, 4-5.

security mindset.

Given all these requirements, Political Warfare does not produce a quick, decisive victory. Instead, it requires time and patience. Furthermore, just as the USG and the GOC stumbled and staggered through the implementation of Plan Colombia, likely, so too will future actors who pursue a Political Warfare approach. No two operational environments are the same, therefore what worked in Colombia may not work again; any further implementation of Political Warfare will undoubtedly require some trial and error. This notion creates risk for practitioners in that American society is an impatient one and expects near instant gratification. However, those who seek to practice Political Warfare can mitigate this risk by managing expectations effectively prior to embarking on this approach.

Conclusion

TCOs operate in an environment where "traditional statecraft is inadequate or ineffective and large-scale conventional military options are not suitable or are deemed inappropriate for a variety of reasons."[201] The USG is faced with a conundrum as the world becomes more closely interrelated and traditional responses by the instruments of national power are inadequate to respond to the resultant ambiguity. By acknowledging and embracing the problems of the gray zone, the USG may come to appreciate the utility of Political Warfare.

As retired General Stanley McChrystal, former Commander of the International Security Assistance Force and Commander of US Forces Afghanistan, once noted, "it takes a network to defeat a network."[202] The USG must develop its own network by teaming with empowered and enabled international and non-government organizations to understand, discover, and ultimately

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[201] Votel, et al., 102.

[202] Stanley A. McChrystal, "It Takes a Network: The New Frontline of Modern Warfare," *Foreign Policy*, February 21, 2011, accessed November 10, 2015, http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/02/21/it-takes-a-network/.

dismantle or destroy TCOs. Unfortunately, given the disparity of interests present in a team comprised of multiple agents, it can be difficult to achieve a unified action plan. Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, offer an example of how Political Warfare can serve as a framework from which a unified network may defeat a TCO network in the gray zone.

After identifying the nature of the TCOs threat, this monograph sought to expound upon the Dr. Mazarr's model of the gray zone. Coupling his theory, as well as that presented by SOCOM, with Dr. Milan Vego's model for the continuum of conflict, this monograph developed a model of the gray zone which highlights the actions that occur between peace and war. Using this model will help Political Warfare practitioners understand how to gain a position of advantage before and after the hostilities phase with the goal "to produce a decision without any serious fighting."[203]

The strained situation in Colombia, in combination with USG incentives to intervene, produced Plan Colombia. This initiative bred subsequent initiatives meant to curb corruption, develop Colombia's capacity to improve the rule of law, establish a presence in territories to reestablish trust with the local populace, and end the violence by negotiating a peace with the insurgencies.[204] The underlying issues facing Colombia centered on human security, as the people did not trust the GOC and sought greater security from TCOs. The whole of government approach to improving human security, under the DSDP, worked to convince the local populace of the legitimacy of the government. Within this whole of government approach, the USG sought to employ a light military footprint intent upon improving the internal security situation and the capability of the COLMIL and CNP. In developing this capability, the Colombians were able to

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[203] Azar Gat, *A History of Military Thought from the Enlightment to the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 212. Gat quotes philosopher Basil Liddel Hart who remarked, "The perfection of strategy would be, therefore, to produce a decision without any serious fighting."

[204] Garzón, Carrera, and Olson, 4-5.

secure their country and thereby reduce the TCOs' sanctuaries without the need for a full-scale USG military deployment. While critics suggest Plan Colombia has yet to achieve its aim, others view the ongoing peace negotiations with the FARC as a symbol of success in a country battered by a century of civil strife.

The efforts of Plan Colombia, and its subsequent initiatives, would have sunk themselves had it not been for unity of effort among the actors involved. The US Country Team and the operatives on the ground who understood the environment communicated clearly to Washington and were able to describe an environment in which the GOC was eventually the primary proponent and required only limited support from the USG. In future conflicts, it will be the responsibility for the subject matter experts to provide a clear picture of the operational environment in order to allow decision makers to develop a cohesive strategy that capitalizes on all the strengths of the instruments of national power.

Political Warfare serves as a framework to bolster US influence throughout the global commons by executing targeted operations in the gray zone. The USG must shift its focus on 'hard components' to a more balanced response in the operational environment. Former Secretary of Defense, Robert M. Gates, remarked that we must "work with and through local governments to avoid the next insurgency, to rescue the next failing state, or to head off the next humanitarian disaster."[205] In a resource constrained and evermore globalized operational environment, national security is a cooperative effort, both domestically as well as internationally.

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[205] Field Manual (FM) 3-07, *Stability Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2008), 2-1, accessed February 4, 2016, http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/repository/FM307 /FM3-07. Secretary Gates is quoted as saying, "Repeating an Afghanistan or an Iraq—forced regime change followed by nation-building under fire—probably is unlikely in the foreseeable future. What is likely though, even a certainty, is the need to work with and through local governments to avoid the next insurgency, to rescue the next failing state, or to head off the next humanitarian disaster. Correspondingly, the overall posture and thinking of the United States armed forces has shifted—away from solely focusing on direct American military action, and towards new capabilities to shape the security environment in ways that obviate the need for military intervention in the future."

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