



(U) Colombia: COLMIL Historical Perspectives

31 December 2003



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(U) Then and Now:

- (U) In 1959 and again in 1962, U.S. officials conducted survey of COLMIL counter-insurgency capabilities^{1,2}
- (U) Key findings included:
 - (U) Lack of central planning and coordination affecting counter-insurgency efforts at all levels
 - (U) Resource fragmentation requires logistical reform
 - (U) Insufficient communications, transportation, and equipment to prosecute coordinated and sustained combat operations
 - (U) Inadequate fusion and dissemination of intelligence at COLAR and national level hamper counter-insurgency effort
 - (U) Civic action and psychological operations must be continuous rather than sporadic
 - (U) Broad social, political, and economic problems exist and solutions appear remote
 - (U) Continued development of special counter-guerrilla teams from helicopters with emphasis on Lanceros will substantially reduce guerrillas within a year
- (U) Key findings of most recent (Oct 03) evaluations include:³
- (U) Three weeks of engagements with COLMIL commanders presented seven key judgments:

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(U) COLMIL Campaign Plans Compared:

(U) Plan Lazo, 1962-1966: five phased plan whose stated primary objective was to eliminate the "independent republics" and destroy guerrilla-bandit groups⁴

- o (U) 1962, total estimated strength of guerrilla-bandit groups was approximately 8,500
- o (U) 1964, total estimated strength of guerrilla-bandit groups was approximately 2,000
- o (U) According to 1964 AMEMB cable, COLAR determined more aggressive action was necessary in one "communist" zone located in southern Tolima where a communist nicknamed "Tirofijo" Manuel Marulanda (a.k.a. Tirofijo) had been active in this zone and continues to sit atop the FARC
- o (U) 1966, violence levels significantly reduced but Plan Lazo stalls as elite interest wanes; U.S. became increasingly focused on conflict in Vietnam

BASIC PHASING		
Phase	LAZO (1962 - 66)	PATRIOTA (2003 - 06)
1 / 1	Preparatory actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop campaign plan • Position forces for 2A • Repel FARC from Cundinamarca, secure Bogotá • Position forces for 2B
2 / 2A	Initiate counteraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the battlespace
3 / 2B	Assume offensive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attack FARC areas of combat generating power • Target strategic leadership
4 / 2C	Destroy guerrillas and bandit gangs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure Medellín and key economic centers • Extend operations nationwide, targeting remaining concentrations • Integrate demobilized guerrillas • Consolidate gains
5 / 2D	Reconstruction and consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake socio-economic reforms, development programs

(S) Plan Lazo vs Plan Patriota

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(U) Plan Lazo Lessons Learned:^{12, 13, 14}

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- o (U) Civil affairs, civil defense, and counterinsurgency operations combined to deny widespread development of clandestine civilian infrastructure

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- o (U) Attacking leadership of guerrilla-bandit gangs splintered organizational cohesion, resulting in a 20 percent increase in enemy KIAs

- (b)(1) [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- (U) Intelligence was a vital force multiplier, allowing security forces to deal with both main-line guerrilla units and their underground support structures
 - (b)(1) [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
- (U) Counterinsurgency is a political strategy with a derivative military component; other components are political, economic, social
 - (b)(1) [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]

(b)(1) [Redacted]

(b)(6) [Redacted]

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~~Derived From: Multiple Sources~~

~~Declassify On: X1~~

Coordinated with (b)(6) [Redacted]

Sources:

(b)(1) [Redacted]

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