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TITLE: SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION TO U.S. POLICY ON DRUGS

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION TO U.S. POLICY ON DRUGS

1. ON JUNE 24 LA PAZ DAILY "HOY" (LEFT-LEANING, POPULIST) PUBLISHED A COMMENTARY BY LUPE CAJIAS ENTITLED, "TO 'COLOMBIANIZE': A BADLY UTILIZED VERB." BLOCK QUOTES FOLLOW.

2. "THE U.S. EMBASSY AND THE COUNTERNARCOTICS AGENCIES OF THE WHITE HOUSE AND PENTAGON PROMOTE THE MILITARIZATION OF THE FIGHT AGAINST COCA-COCAINE TO PREVENT THE 'COLOMBIANIZATION' OF BOLIVIA.

"THE BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH RESIGNEDLY EXECUTES THE MILITARIZATION AND ACCEPTS THE ARRIVAL OF U.S. MILITARY ADVISORS TO TRAIN BOLIVIAN SOLDIERS WHO WILL NOT RETURN TO THEIR BARRACKS AFTER NEXT DECEMBER, CATEGORICALLY AFFIRMS THAT THE 'COLOMBIANIZATION' OF BOLIVIA MUST BE AVOIDED....

"TO 'COLOMBIANIZE' IS MORE AN OBFUSCATION THAN A CLARIFICATION. IT SERVES AS A CURTAIN BECAUSE IT HIDES THE TRUE SOURCES OF COLOMBIAN VIOLENCE AND SHOWS DRUG TRAFFICKING AS THE ONLY INGREDIENT OF THAT DAILY WAR.

"A COLOMBIAN CORRESPONDENT IN BOLIVIA SAID, THEY (THE AMERICANS) DO NOT WANT TO UNDERSTAND OUR COUNTRY. WE ARE VIOLENT BECAUSE WE ARE NOT SUBMISSIVE, BECAUSE WE DO NOT LET THEM (THE U.S.) PUT THEIR FINGERS INTO OUR MOUTH, BUT BECAUSE THEY DO, WE REACT.'...

"ILLEGAL DRUG TRAFFICKING IN COLOMBIA BEGAN WITH MARIJUANA, CULTIVATED IN GUAGIRA AND SANTANDER. PLANTS

REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior
Reviewer

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1

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COME AND PLANTS GO; IT WAS AN IMPORTANT BUSINESS UNTIL THE MID-SEVENTIES, WHEN THERE WERE MORE PLANTS IN THE U.S. AND THEY COULD BE GROWN IN HOME GARDENS OF THE COUNTRY THAT WAS THE PRINCIPLE CONSUMER OF THE HERB, SOPHISTICATEDLY CALLED 'GRASS.'...

"PRESIDENT CESAR GAVIRIA, SINCE ASSUMING HIS POSITION IN AUGUST OF LAST YEAR, PROPOSED A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PLAN TO COMBAT NARCOTRAFFICKING AND ITS ACCOMPANYING CONSEQUENCES--A COLOMBIAN PLAN THAT IS FROWNED UPON BOTH BY THE PRESS AND THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

"GAVIRIA PROPOSED DIALOGUE RATHER THAN WAR, SUGGESTING THAT IF ONE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT 'COLOMBIANIZING' THE PROBLEM, THEN THE SOLUTIONS REQUIRED CONSULTATION WITH HIS PEOPLE. THE COLOMBIAN STATE DEFENDS ITSELF BY NOT SUCCUMBING TO A WAR THAT IS DECLARED BY SOME AND IN WHICH OTHERS DIE.

"THE REDUCTION OF PENALTIES FOR NARCOTRAFFICKERS AND THE DECISION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TO PROHIBIT EXTRADITION ARE THE TWO LEGAL INSTRUMENTS THAT COUNTER THE MILITARIZATION OF THE WAR AGAINST NARCOTICS.

"THE SURRENDER OF PABLO ESCOBAR, THE OCHOA BROTHERS, AND THE PRINCIPLE MEMBERS OF THE MEDELLIN CARTEL ARE A TRIUMPH OF THAT 'COLOMBIANIZATION,' EVEN WHEN IT IS CLEAR THAT EVEN THOUGH AN EPOCH HAS ENDED THE BUSINESS--AND THE VIOLENCE--CONTINUE."

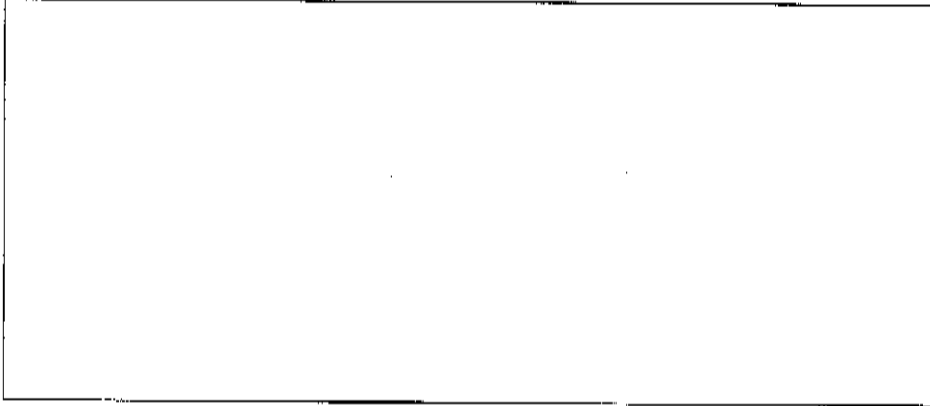
3. COMMENT: THIS COMMENTARY IS REPRESENTATIVE OF SEVERAL OTHERS WE HAVE SEEN IN THE LAST FEW DAYS WHICH APPLAUD COLOMBIA'S "DEAL" WITH TRAFFICKERS LIKE ESCOBAR. THE MESSAGE COMMON TO THESE OP/ED PIECES IS THAT U.S.-URGED RESPONSES TO THE PROBLEM OF DRUG PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICKING IN LATIN AMERICA PROVOKE VIOLENCE AND THAT THE NEW COLOMBIAN RESPONSE IS FAR MORE HEALTHY AND APPROPRIATE TO LATIN AMERICAN REALITIES. TO DATE, NO COLUMNIST SEEMS TO HAVE CONSIDERED THAT IT WAS PRECISELY LAW ENFORCEMENT PRESSURE THAT BROUGHT ABOUT ESCOBAR'S SURRENDER.

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RUEHNA/DEAHQS WASHDC//OF/OC/DO/A//
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4