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## Colombia: Notes On Recent Violence

*by John Neagle*

*Category/Department: General*

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Feb. 28: According to police, three rebels pertaining to the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) were killed in fighting with soldiers late Wednesday near the northeastern towns of Labranzagrando and Arauca. Magdalena state police reported that National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrillas attacked the northern towns of Banco and Tamalamequito in an effort to pressure residents not to vote in the March 11 legislative and municipal elections. Dynamite attacks against four energy company facilities in Medellin caused a blackout in 30% of the city. In telephone calls to local radio stations, the "Popular Militiamen" claimed responsibility for the attacks, which they were in retaliation for a recent increase in electricity rates. March 1: The Radio Caracol network reported that Patriotic Union (UP) party officials said several men wearing military uniforms painted death threats against UP members on walls in Segovia, a town located about 500 km. north of Bogota. A group calling itself "Death to Revolutionaries of the Northeast" left a message in the mayor's office threatening to kill him and other local party leaders if they did not leave town within three days, Caracol reported. UP officials blamed rightist death squads for the Feb. 26 murder of the mayor of the northern town of Apartado. March 5: Gen. Jaime Neira said in an interview broadcast by Caracol that on March 4 FARC guerrillas exploded more than 100 pounds of dynamite on a road as two army trucks carrying 40 soldiers drove by, resulting in the deaths of 13 soldiers and destruction of one of the trucks. Two more died as they received medical treatment on Monday. The general said seven rebels were killed in fighting after the explosion. The ambush occurred, he said, near Jose de Ocueme, a town 380 km. east of Bogota. According to official sources, the ELN is holding five mayors, two congresspersons, a city councilman and several political organizers. Most were kidnapped in the country's northeastern region, where support for the group is strongest. (Basic data from AP, 03/01/90, 03/05/90)

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