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John Neagle

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## **Colombia: Elite Force Formed To Counter Rightist Paramilitary Groups; Six Peasant Leaders Assassinated**

*by John Neagle*

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On April 19, President Virgilio Barco announced the formation of an elite force of 1,000 men to counter rightist paramilitary groups responsible for the murder of leftist activists, peasants, and trade union and human rights organization leaders. On April 21, police reported that six peasant leaders were killed by gunmen in Caqueta province, southeastern Colombia. Relatives of the victims who witnessed the killings said several men in two campers drove up to their homes, called the victims by name, and shot them to death. Police said they had no knowledge of motives for the multiple killings. (Basic data from AFP, 04/21/89)

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