

25% of the planet's kidnappings, and the trend points upwards. Between January 1996 and 25 April 1999, there were a total of 4,925 reported kidnappings, with 66% perpetrated by guerrillas, 19.6% by criminals, 1.3% by paramilitaries, and 22.6% by unknown authors.⁹⁵ The trade is worth at least \$80 million US annually,⁹⁶ and perhaps more, since many kidnappings simply go unreported. Not only are the boundaries between soldier and civilian erased, but the phenomenon is also indicative of the privatization of war whereby the bounds of military financing are being pushed.

The business of kidnapping, while clearly important, is secondary overall as a source of income for subversive groups. Estimates suggest that the guerrillas in Colombia could reasonably receive as much as \$500-600 annually from the illicit drug trade - and this does not count the paramilitary's 'cut'.⁹⁷ Yet the FARC denies any connection whatsoever to narcotrafficking.⁹⁸ Experts suggest that, like much of politics in Colombia, even the power of the FARC is dispersed - some factions derive support from narcotrafficking, while others remain vehemently opposed to it on moral and ideological grounds.⁹⁹ The paramilitaries also deny any connection to the industry,¹⁰⁰ yet extensive drug laboratories operated by the paramilitaries have been discovered,¹⁰¹ and it is well known that their origin was as the official security arm of the narcos. While warfare and violence in Colombia existed long before the advent of narcotrafficking, what is clear is that narcotrafficking has amplified these.

Turning to a more geographical focus upon the notion of shifting boundaries, Colombia's 'zona de distensión' is truly noteworthy. In what may be viewed as a rather bizarre olive branch for tarnished 'peace negotiations' originally scheduled for July 1999, the Federal Government provided the Farc in November of 1998 with a chunk of territory about the size of Switzerland (16,000 square miles and about 100,000 residents). The Government retracted all its forces from the 'zona', leaving the guerrillas free to utilize the strategic region chiefly for coca growth, and perhaps military training, as well. Politicians