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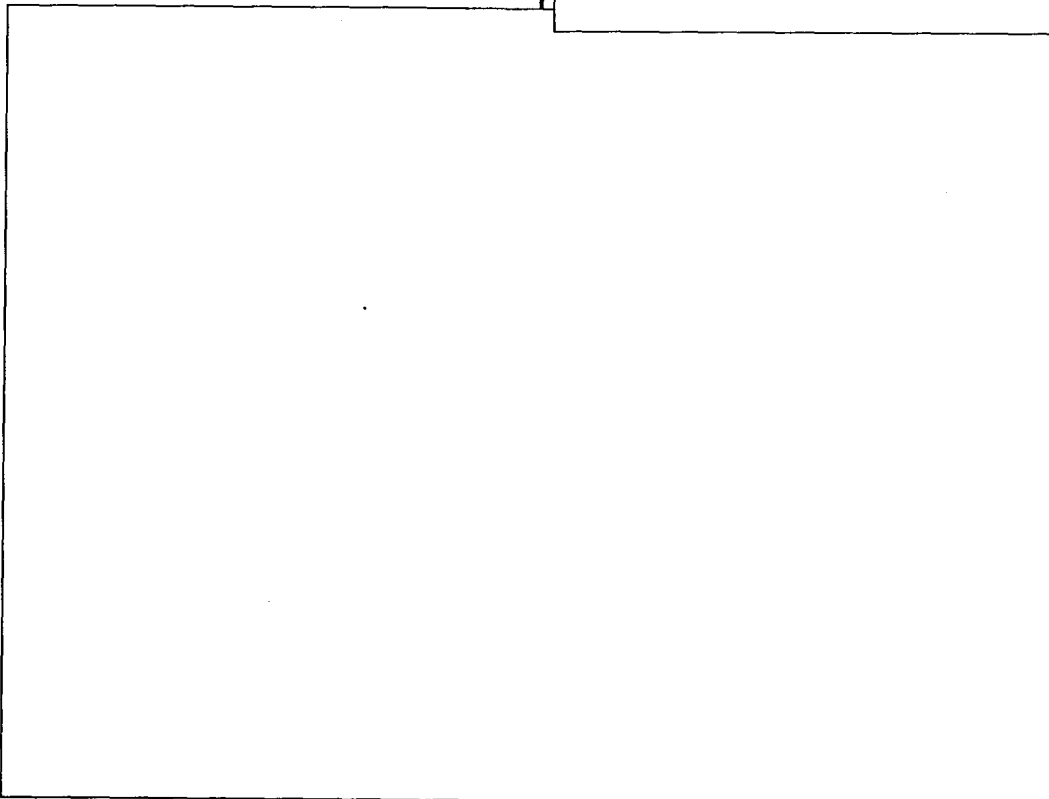
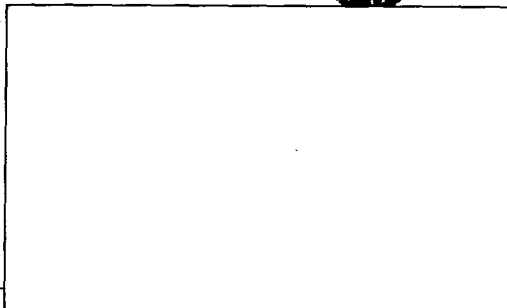
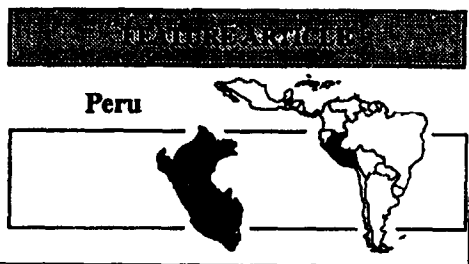


Latin American Military Issues

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Directorate of Intelligence



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Colombia



Venezuela



Alliances of Military Convenience

Unofficial paramilitary groups with a variety of backgrounds and motives are assisting Bogota's efforts against both the Medellin druglord Pablo Escobar and radical leftist insurgents. The Persecuted by Pablo Escobar Organization (PEPES) and Free Colombia, two newly formed paramilitary groups, are attacking Escobar's supporters and property. PEPES reportedly has killed at least 37 of Escobar's associates and sympathizers. In addition, the group recently dynamited one of Escobar's country homes, set fire to his mother's house, destroyed his antique car warehouse, and planted car bombs near his relatives' residences. For its part, Free Colombia is offering \$5 million for Escobar—dead or alive—claiming publicly that its 150-member organization is financed by big business and is connected with the security services.

Officials contend that PEPES is made up of surviving members of the families of two Escobar henchmen murdered by the suspicious Medellin kingpin

