

**MARCH 30, 2000**

**SCHAKOWSKY CALLS HOUSE APPROVAL OF AID PACKAGE TO COLOMBIA  
"A FIRST IN A SERIES OF BLANK CHECKS FOR A WAR WITH NO FORESEEABLE END  
GAME"**

**"IS THIS COUNTER-NARCOTICS OR COUNTER-INSURGENCY?" SCHAKOWSKY ASKS**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. - Following the approval by the House of Representatives of a \$13 billion emergency funding bill which included \$1.7 billion in aid to Colombia, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today said that this was "a first in a series of blank checks for a war with no foreseeable end game."**

**Schakowsky also said that many questions still remain about the Colombia aid package and that supporters of this aid along with the Administration have failed to answer serious questions about this anti-drug policy.**

**"Why are we taking action to invest in a militaristic drug war that may escalate regional conflict in the name of fighting drugs instead of fighting the battle here at home with at least as much vigor? Is this counter-narcotics or counter-insurgency?" Schakowsky asked.**

**Schakowsky also pointed to a General Accounting Office report which found that despite \$625 million in U.S. aid for counter-narcotics efforts in Colombia between 1990-1998, Colombia surpassed Peru and Bolivia to become the world's largest coca producer. Additionally, there has not been a net reduction in coca production in Colombia or cocaine availability in the United States.**

**"Considering the demonstrated failure of militarized eradication efforts to date, why should we believe that investing more money in this type of plan will achieve a different result?" Schakowsky asked.**

**Studies have found that drug control strategies that focus on prevention, treatment and education have been proven successful.**

**"I am disappointed that Congress insists on ignoring studies that show that dollar for dollar treatment for cocaine users is 10 times more effective than drug interdiction and 23 times more effective than eradication at the source. However, I am committee to addressing the drug problem in America by working for more treatment and prevention efforts here at home," Schakowsky said.**