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Introduction:

FARC stands for the Revolutionary Armed Forces of the Columbia and has been operating against the Colombian government since 1964. It is in essence a guerilla movement that has adopted a wide range of military activities in order to meet its demand of making Columbia a communist country. The movement has not been reluctant in using terrorism as a tool and currently consists of more than 20,000 members. In order to further understand how FARC works, let us delve into the history of the FARC.

History:

Creation of FARC

The huge civil war that is locally known as the La Violencia was a large scale civil war between the liberals and the conservatives in the area that resulted in more than 200,000 casualties. The war was followed by a truce between the Liberal and the Conservative Party which was known as the National Front. The original agreement of bipartisan rule lasted until 1974 after which the agreement was subject to multiple amendments. The amended version of the agreement went on till the 1990 which led to consolidation of the military forces in Columbia which before was threatened by radical politics and alternate forms of government. During this time period, one of the most controversial laws in Colombian history was passed. This was the policy of Accelerated Economic Development(AED) which was proposed to the Colombian government by Laughlin Currie, an American economist who owned large tracts of land in Colombia. The policy aimed at optimizing the produce from the arable land and therefore encouraged large scale industrial farming whose objective would be to produce quality animal products and crop...
produce that could be exported to other countries. In letter, the policy seemed to optimize the efficiency of the available land. However, in practice it led to the large scale eviction and forceful displacement of many small scale subsistence farmers from their farm lands. The number of landless families swelled from 40,000 in 1961 to a whooping 400,000 in 1969. These families settled in urban cities, resulting in an increasing supply of labor. The labor wages in turn were driven down and the cultivable land was largely in the use of rich industrialists. Simultaneously, the Colombian Communist party (CCP) which had been in existence since 1930 began establishing ‘peasant leagues’ and ‘peasant fronts’ in rural and urban areas. The harsh policies implemented by the Colombian government were used by the CCP in order to garner more and more support. The CCP organized protests against the government which were stifled with brute force. The use of violence by the government would in turn be met with extremist actions by the CCP.

One of the effects was the rise of the rise of a militant wing of the CCP that grew up in the town of Marquetalia. This group distrusted the government and enjoyed significant influence in the town. After the bipartite agreement was signed, the government started crushing all these autonomous groups. Then in 1961, the head of the CCP group’s militant wing in Marquetalia, Manual Merelanda Velez, announced the creation of a new country to be known as the ‘Republic of Marquetalia’. The Colombian government tried to negate the influence of the group in the area but after a few unsuccessful attacks, the government instead increased the number of army outposts in the region.

In 1959, the US government sent a team to Colombia to analyze the internal security situation of the country and to ensure the strategic interests of the US. Upon the
insistence of the U.S government, the Colombian government attacked the guerilla fighters in Marquetalia in what was majorly seen as an inefficient operation. Most of the guerilla fighters fled the town during the raid by the Colombian government and took refuge in the mountains. Under this plan Lazo, it was also proposed that a paramilitary force be set up in order to combat and fight the different pro-communist militias operating in the country. Resultantly, more and more civilians were recruited by the Colombian military who would inform the Colombian government about guerilla activity in their area.

Under this plan, the Colombian government attacked the town of Marquetalia. There were 16000 Colombian fighters who were charged with defeating Velez and expunging out his private militia. These men attacked the town which only had forty eight armed fighters, many of which managed to escape, therefore leading to huge collateral losses.

These guerilla fighters escaped into the mountains.

These guerilla fighters met five months after the operation and called The First Conference in which they decided to start a guerilla insurgency to be known as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. This force later swelled to include hundreds of new members, many of whom had lost some family member in the Marquetalia raid. Merelanda Velez became the head of what was then known as the “Southern Bloc” and became FARC in 1966. At his side was Luis Morantes alias Jacobo Arenas who assumed control of the party’s political wing.

**FARC from 1964 to 1982**

During the 1960s, FARC remained relatively passive and the Colombian government was involved in operations against other militias. Instead of targeting the FARC, the government of Colombia
FARC conducted both covert and overt operations against the ELN and M-19, newer more active groups that had emerged. The harsh security policy of the government along with FARC’s policy of limited rural insurgency meant that they were not that active. A number of important developments did take place during this time though.

In the 1970s, they started incorporating more and more sophisticated strategies. In the military wing, they created a seven person High Command which was followed by the establishment of a Secretariat in 1974. The army was further divided into units with each unit enjoying a certain level of autonomy. Each unit ran its own intelligence unit, combat unit, managed its finances and carried out public work programs. In the political sphere, the brutal repression of anyone in Colombia who was seemed to be inclined towards the left meant that in spite of the violent activities of FARC, they were viewed as romantic rebels. Things started changing in 1982...

**Crisis Situation:**

The year is now 1982 and the conflict in Colombia is quickly intensifying. The central government is once again attempting a crackdown against the FARC and the drug cartels shuttling cocaine into the United States. As a self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist, agrarian revolutionary movement, it is our goal to oust the current government in and create a new Colombian government, one that answers only to the people and the principles of the FARC. It is of the utmost importance that we accomplish this goal and we will use whatever means within our power to ultimately prevail. This includes our primary tactics of guerilla warfare, hit-and-run tactics, raids on military facilities, and in some cases, direct military engagement with the forces of the Colombian central government. Other
potential tactics include kidnapping and ransoming foreign and domestic business leaders as well as government officials. The crackdown with the central government also comes at a critical moment in Colombian history. Cocaine production in the country has reached its highest levels in the country’s history and the drug now surpasses coffee as the nation’s leading export. Pablo Escobar, the infamous drug kingpin and head of the Medellín Cartel, has just been elected to Congress and is attempting to increase his sphere of influence in the country, combating both rival cartels and the central government. In response to this massive increase in drug production, the central government, with support from the United States, has also begun to target some of the drug cartels in the country.

The increasing tensions and violence between the central government and national drug cartels presents a tremendous opportunity for the FARC. One option to consider in committee is to divert the attention of the Colombian central government from FARC activities further towards the cartel drug trade, playing the two against one another while leaving room for our movement to branch out. At the same time, it is critical to ward off the growing influence of the United States in our country. The country’s fear of communism in South America could lead to greater direct intervention on Colombian soil, targeting the FARC. It is also important to think about how to expand our operations outside our current borders. This needs to be thought about in terms of both military operations and community/infrastructure building, as winning over the hearts and minds of the people is just as important as the territory we conquer.
**FARC**

**Positions:**

**Alfonso Cano, Chief of Finances for the FARC Secretariat:** Cano has been a loyal member of the FARC since the early 1970s, rising through the ranks to become one of the most trusted advisers to Jacobo Arenas, the organization’s founder. As Chief of Finances, he is responsible for managing the budget and taxation of the communities under FARC control. He is loyal to the FARC first and foremost and will challenge anyone who looks to use the movement for their own empowerment.

**Iván Márquez, Political Commissar for Education and Adviser to the Northwestern and Caribbean Blocks:** As adviser to the Northwestern and Caribbean blocs, (northern part of Colombia, with operations on about 5 fronts against the Colombian government), Marquez commands several thousand paramilitary forces in the large swath of territory bordering Venezuela and the Atlantic coast. He is also charged with developing education policy for the FARC-controlled territory, including public education and propaganda programs.

**Raúl Reyes Spokesperson for the FARC and Adviser to the Southern Bloc:** Reyes is the public face of the FARC both within Colombia and Abroad. He is responsible for painting the FARC in a positive light and operates as the head of foreign and public relations, working to build connections with investment in the FARC from abroad. He also holds significant sway over the Southern Bloc operations (region bordering Ecuador and Peru), with several thousand paramilitary forces operating in the region. Although they have yet to be confirmed, rumors have been circulating that he has been taking kickbacks and bribes from foreign and domestic businesses wishing to operate in FARC territory.
Pablo Catatumbo, Adviser on the Drug Trade and Head of the FARC 26th and 6th Fronts: Catatumbo is responsible for managing the FARC’s policies on cocaine and drug trafficking within Colombia. He arranges distribution routes, controls levels of production within FARC held territory, and manages its delivery to the United States. Along with Pastor Alape, he is responsible for the Taxation of cocaine within the country, although leaves enforcement of the rules to Alape and his team. He also commands a team of several hundred paramilitary forces operating on the 26th and 6th fronts of the country.

Iván Ríos, Head of the Central Bloc of the FARC: As the youngest member of the FARC Secretariat, Ríos has moved rapidly up the chain of command. He cares more about power in the country than loyalty to the cause and is willing to do anything to advance his authority within the FARC. Ríos’ command covers the central highlands of Colombia, operating on about 6 fronts with several hundred paramilitary troops. It includes the historical area of Marquetalia, considered as the birthplace of the FARC and critical to the movements operations.

Manuel Marulanda, Commander-in-Chief of the FARC Military Operations: Along with Jacobo Arenas, Marulanda was one of the founders of the FARC movement and has commanded it for more than two decades. As the Commander-in-Chief of the FARC, he is responsible for coordinating the combined defense policy of the movement and working with the different regional blocs throughout the country. In recent years, he has come into several clashes with Arenas over the future of the movement, leaving deep tensions between the two and splitting the FARC leadership.

Jacobo Arenas, Political Leader of the FARC and Chief Adviser for Policy: As co-founder of the FARC, Arenas has been the head of the political operations of the
organization, working to gain greater recognition of the movement by the general Colombian populace and the central government. He has recently fought with Manuel Marulanda over the future of the organization, pushing for negotiations with the central government and potentially forming a political party that could stand for national elections.

**Víctor Julio Suárez Rojas, Deputy Commander-in-Chief and Commander of the Eastern Bloc of the FARC:** Rojas commands the largest region of the FARC, operating on about 20 fronts and covers the eastern Andes mountains and the central departments of Cundinamarca and Boyacá. This has also been where some of the fiercest fighting between the FARC and the central government has occurred and it acts as a critical conduit for the movement’s drug routes.

**Timoleón Jiménez, commander of the Middle Magdalena Bloc of the FARC:** Jimenez commands a group of special militias number around 800 in the Middle Magdalena Bloc, bordering Venezuela and operating on 8 fronts. The region has become one of the Colombian army's biggest worries, as Jimenez has continued to expand the FARC influence. An astute commander willing to use whatever force he deems necessary, has widespread respect among the rank-and-file, particularly the hardliners that form the core of the rural fighters in the country.

**Pastor Alape, Adviser on Taxation of Cocaine and the Drug Trade:** Along with Catatumbo, Alape is responsible for the Taxation of cocaine within the country and communication with the nation’s various drug cartels. He also commands an elite team of paramilitary forces tasked with hunting down any cartel or individual who violates the group’s drug taxes and policies. He is also known as one of the most brutal leaders of the FARC, torturing and
murdering hundreds of people who violated the movement’s policies.

**Joaquín Gómez, Deputy Commander of the Southern Bloc:** Known as “the Enforcer” of the FARC in the southern bloc, he has a close relationship with Raul Reyes but is keen on taking a greater role in the southern command. He commands several hundred paramilitary troops and often leads raids on government controlled military facilities and villages.

**Mauricio Jaramillo, Adviser on National Health and Infrastructure Development:** Jaramillo is responsible for the setup of medical facilities in the central jungles of the FARC-controlled territory, as well as setting up medical and sanitation training for FARC combatants. He has taken the lead in building relationships with local villages and communities under FARC control, helping to develop domestic infrastructure like roads and power systems. As the personal doctor to FARC commander Manuel Marulanda, he has major sway over military policy and allies closely with the FARC co-founder.

**Efraín Guzmán, Director of Intelligence Gathering:** Considered one of the longest serving members of the FARC, Guzman helped found many of the movement’s key operations in the Southern and Caribbean blocs. Now head of Intelligence, he is responsible for gathering information on Colombian military and government operations in the country. He has also begun to expand his reach into national cartels and other states involved in the conflict, including the United States.