

authored by Wiesner and his staff in the planning department for the Turbay administration.

De-urbanization focus

Despite the potential of the ambitious PIN program to serve as the vehicle for massive high-technology and capital-goods transfers to the Colombian economy, its architects in fact have a different purpose in mind. Designed to span 1979-83 and pump some \$21 billion of domestic and foreign resources into largely public works projects in Colombia's more outlying regions, the PIN is explicitly intended to bring about the "decentralization" of the Colombian economy. *Decentralization*, in World Bank terminology, means "reversing the flow of migration to the cities" or, to be more precise, de-urbanization. "The ultimate goal," according to the PIN's author, "is regional autonomy."

Once that goal is achieved, one World Bank researcher observed, local financing needs will increasingly become the responsibility of local entities. Under such conditions, the highly lucrative drug trade could become an irresistible option. As one professor from Bolívar province told *EIR*, 10 bushels of corn is worth barely 1,000 pesos, while 10 bushels of marijuana can bring in 175,000 pesos!

The other primary focus of the PIN is construction of transportation and communications infrastructure to facilitate the extraction of Colombia's vast mineral and energy wealth, as with the Cerrejón coal project contracted to Exxon. Advanced technologies will be used only in such foreign enclaves, while "appropriate technologies" will be encouraged for the domestic economy.

Perhaps most significant is the fact that the austerity regimen to which Wiesner is pledged is a built-in aspect of the PIN. As one economist has noted, domestic financing of the PIN as Wiesner envisions it can only occur through certain policy options: "One option is realizing reforms that increase the elasticity of regional and local income: another is austerity and greater efficiency in public expenditures, especially in labor costs and other general expenses; a third option is more rapidly increasing rates on public services."

In fact, all three options are already in the implementation stage. The passage of a "tax reform" is the new finance minister's stated first priority, a reform which is expected to give carte blanche to the drug-tainted financial community in its drive to take over what remains of Colombia's bankrupt agricultural and industrial sectors. Figures just released by the government reveal that profits of Colombia's finance corporations *doubled* in 1980 alone while those of the productive sector plummeted, and were even negative in some industries.

Wage gouging has been a preferred method of government-dictated "belt-tightening" under García Parra and will continue under Wiesner. And even while the PIN has been touted for its plans to extend basic social services to the deprived outlying regions, in major urban centers like Bogotá those same services are being priced out of reach. Last week, the Bogotá city government announced a whopping 17 percent hike in electricity rates. This comes on top of the automatic 3 percent monthly rate increases which were imposed by the World Bank four years ago.

Wiesner Duran challenged by Bogota industrialist

A leading industrialist and former head of the Federation of Metallurgical Industries, Fernando Sanz Manrique, registered his protest against the government's deindustrialization strategy in a Jan. 11 column in the leading Bogotá daily El Tiempo:

There was a time when the industrialist was the darling of the country. It was a noble activity, praised by all. The children wanted to become industrialists when they grew up. The politician saw industry as the national redemption. . . . Chimneys were a vision of progress and not an ecological nightmare.

And basically everything that is modern in the

country was made by industry. The cities of the country were made by industry. The process of industrialization made it possible to supersede the two greatest problems of the century: the population explosion of the fifties and sixties, and the mass migration from the countryside to the cities.

But times have changed. And industrialization became an antiquated idea in some circles of the new technocrats [like] Milton Friedman. . . .

And today the style is public works, certainly necessary for a country under construction. It is possible that public works can substitute . . . for industry in the generation of employment, in the number of jobs. But not in terms of quality of life or wages. The wages of a construction laborer are not comparable to those of an industrial worker. . . .

Industrialization continues to be in a bad way. When will it come into fashion in foreign universities so that we can think about it again on a national level?