

fonso Cano, among others—Jhony is selected to participate in a school for assassins at the service of the FARC and the PCC.

Following that course in 1985, Jhony begins to carry out the task of “purging”: people inside the PCC who had “diverged” from the line; politicians who opposed the actions of the FARC and the PCC; or businessmen and ranchers who refused to pay their “taxes” to the FARC. In four months, Jhony murders 60 people, many of them PCC or Patriotic Union activists. Communist propaganda later blamed these assassinations on the Army or on groups allegedly supported by the Army. These actions were carried out in the departments of Tolima and Huila, and especially in the capital cities of Ibagué and Neiva. Intelligence, logistical support, and selection of victims was supplied by the PCC.

Jhony recalls various conversations he overheard, in which the fate of Bernardo Jaramillo Ossa was sealed. Jaramillo was assassinated while he was the Presidential candidate of the Patriotic Union in 1990. His crime was that he had become a supporter of Soviet *perestroika*.

In his last mission, Jhony and the other assassins now under his command mistake the rancher they are assigned to murder, with the head of the PCC in Neiva. They assassinate the “comrade.” Jhony faces a “war council,” and manages to save his skin by claiming that the error was not his, but that of “intelligence” which had given him wrong information. The vote that saved his life was 58-54.

### **Betrayal and counter-betrayal**

Later, Jhony is accused by a rival of being an infiltrator for the Army, and again put on trial. This time, he saves himself by offering an elaborate confession, and handing over the names of his alleged collaborators—all veteran FARC “combatants.” When the smoke clears and the accusation is retracted, Jhony’s daring attracts the attention of the FARC “secretariat,” and he is brought onto the personal guard of the legendary FARC chief Jacobo Arenas.

In December 1990, Jhony defends the Green House (a mountainous region in La Uribe, Meta, which served as the general headquarters of the FARC for nearly 10 years), when the Army launches an offensive that dislodges the FARC secretariat. It is a few months later, that Jhony decides to finally escape from the FARC, and in his getaway, he kills four of his former comrades.

During his “life” in the FARC, Jhony had relations with several women guerrillas. Some of his lovers were forced to flee the FARC because they became pregnant and refused to undergo abortions as the camp commanders ordered. By the end of the 1980s, “Tirofijo” had decided that any woman guerrilla who became pregnant would be immediately shot.

After deserting the FARC, Jhony wrote this book at the age of 23. Today, he is in hiding—he knows neither how to pray to God for forgiveness, nor how to flee from the assassination contract the FARC has out for him.

## **Business under a narco-dictatorship**

*The following testimony was acquired in an interview with EIR.*

I am a businessman. I am not going to tell you my name, nor the city where my business operates. I belong to the upper social class, where individuality does not exist and where one is a property of the family to which one is born. In sum, I have a company which was family property, but which is now the property of a guerrilla group. I myself was the property of my family, but I am now the property of the guerrilla, the same which some call narco-guerrilla. I don’t want to mention the name of the group.

I don’t want to tell you what my company produces, nor its size, nor how many workers, nor its capital, nor the volume of its sales. My company was an industrial company; today it is practically an importing company, and a laundry of money from the drug trade and other crimes.

The problem began some seven years ago. A neighboring company received a message from a guerrilla group. I don’t want to identify the name of the group. The message said that following an inventory of the property and an appraisal that the guerrillas had made, the owners of the plant were expected to pay the guerrilla group a “war tax” on a monthly basis; if not, the company would be considered “a military objective.”

The owners of the company refused to accept the blackmail, advised the police and the Army of the incident, and ignored the threatening letter. A new message arrived soon after, warning that because they had gone to the police and the Army, which was considered the equivalent of collaborating with the enemy, they would henceforth be treated as a military objective. One week later, a medium-sized bomb exploded in the plant. It happened at night and no one was hurt, but panic seized the workers of the plant. A week later, another bomb was set off. The owners decided to sell the plant in a hurry, cheaply, and without confirming the honesty of the new owners. The old owners moved to Bogotá. Rumor has it that they later left the country.

The owners of another neighboring plant also refused to pay the “vaccination,” as it is called. There, they used another tactic, kidnapping one of the manager’s children. The child was later released. It is said that a fortune was paid for the child’s ransom. Worst of all is that to pay the ransom, they had to indebt themselves totally with several banks.

Things were worse still for another neighbor. His family had made a pact whereby if any of the family were kidnapped, the others pledged not to pay any ransom so as to not "foment crime." Five kidnappings and assassinations later, the survivors sold their company and left the area. Still another neighbor, unable to pay the ransom for his kidnapped son, decided to hand over the company and lend his name as a front for the guerrillas.

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the guerrillas "will let us work." My company fell into this category. After reviewing the different cases that we knew of, my family decided that this was the best solution: to coexist with crime. I have already said that I am not myself, but rather a property of my family.

After making contact, we began to give the monthly sum to the terrorists. Everything went well until three years ago, when the contacts decided to present me to the "commander of the financial front." He proposed to buy my company for a respectable sum, that I could decide what to do with the money, or, if I wanted, they would send the money abroad for me, but I had to continue to appear as the owner and manager of the company. Later, he thanked me for having voluntarily approved the contribution of a "war tax," and made it very clear that if I did not accept his offer, the only option was my death and that of my family. He said it should be seen as an expropriation with indemnification, within a minimal program toward the seizure of socialist power. He reminded me of what Lenin said: "The last capitalist will sell the rope to hang the next-to-the-last capitalist." I later learned that this method of taking over companies was learned through their alliance with the drug cartels.

I presented the new situation to my family. They accepted it as the only option possible. We accepted. But my wife and children decided to abandon the country, and are living abroad on the interest from the money they paid us, and something more which I am allowed to send them. But, my mother, several brothers, and my uncles are still here, and upon them would fall the punishment of death should I leave

the country.

I also learned that before taking over a business sector, like the sector in which my company operates, [the guerrillas] carry out a detailed economic census, assessing the sales of the companies, the owners, the automobiles they use, the homes they live in, and any other properties they may have elsewhere.

And thus I was turned into a front man for the guerrillas. They forced me to hire secretaries and accountants from among their group, and to hire another 20 people who had no specific function in the company and who mainly used the company to conduct economic espionage against other companies. Sometimes they disappeared for a time, and only showed up to collect their salaries.

They began to use the accounts of the company, both in Colombia and abroad, to launder money. I don't know if the money came from kidnappings, or the drug trade, or from other activities. I only know that they had nothing to do with the legitimate sales of the company. All telephone and personal contact that I made was strictly overseen, and the "financial front" demanded weekly accountings from me of the money I made. One time, a stock market investment I had made abroad did not come out the way I had hoped, and they were extremely angry.

When the [government's] economic "opening" began to seriously affect the company's operations, I proposed to them that we import the product, leaving minimal production in the plant, and that we fire the majority of the workers, dedicating the company primarily to merchandising the imported product through a distribution network that the factory had. They agreed, not without first justifying themselves by saying that the workers had to be defended, but that unemployment was the government's problem, not theirs.

So this was done. I fired 80% of the workers. Of course, their own people could not be removed from the payroll. I explained the burden they represented for the profitability of the company, but they said that this didn't matter, because what was most important was to use the company to handle other money. Strangely enough, although they used every ruse possible to pay the least possible, the company paid its taxes to the state according to the law.

Had there been any serious investigation, anomalies in the company's accounting would have been detected a long time ago and I would be in jail. But if one combines the inability of the state to control crime and trace illicit funds, with the fact that I am above all suspicion, the narco-guerrilla had struck the perfect blow with me, silent and profitable.

Personally, I suffer from the absence of my immediate loved ones, an absence I try to fill up with weekend activities. I conserve the appearance of the same social status. I continue to draw the same salary as before, annually adjusted for inflation. Of course, I no longer receive profits. But the major difference is that, before, I was the property of my family. Now I belong to the narco-guerrilla.