Current Class:

Current Handling: n/a
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ACTION ARA-01

LOG-00 EB-01 HA-09 INFO AID-01 AMAD-01 SJK-01 DS-00 INR-01 IO-19 OIG-01 OMB-01 L - 03INM-01 LAB-04 INRE-00 H-01 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OIG-01 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-01 ADS-00 PRS-01 RP-10 SIL-01 SNP-01 SP-01 SR-01 P-01 TRSE-00 T-01 USIE-00 FMP-01 /088W SS-01 STR-20

-----BA81DD 231658Z /38 P 231647Z DEC 91

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1224

INFO DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC

DEA WASHDC

DIRFBI WASHDC

DIRIRONDPC WASHDC//OR//

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY LA PÀZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM

USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA

CIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

RELEASED IN PART 1.5(D), B1, 1.5(B), B6

SECTION 01 OF 03 BOGOTA 19523

DEA FOR AD, AO, AX, DO, OC, OF, OIOA



PAGE 02 BOGOTA 19523 01 OF 03 231654Z

CINCSO AND CINCLANT ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR

TAGS: PINS, SNAR, PHUM, PGOV, ASEC, CO

SUBJECT: CRISIS RIPS MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY GROUP

REF: BOGOTA 18523

1. (C) SUMMARY: COLOMBIA'S MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATION IS IN CRISIS. AN INTERNAL BLOOD FEUD HAS BROKEN OUT OVER THE GROUP'S SURRENDER TO COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES (REFTEL). FEARING ANOTHER ATTEMPT ON HIS

Current Class: (

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE REVIEW AUTHORITY: SAM A. MOSKOWITZ DATE/CASE ID: 25 JUN 2001 200100593

Current Class: 6

Current Handling: n/a

Document Number: 1991BOGOTA19523

Page: 2

Channel: n/a

LIFE, THE ORGANIZATION'S LEADER, ARIEL OTERO, HAS FLED TO CALI TO BE PROTECTED BY THAT CITY'S DRUG MAFIA. THE LEADER OF THE DISSIDENTS, WHO VOW TO REMAIN ARMED, MAY BE LOCAL POLITICAL LEADER IVAN DUQUE, REMEMBERED AS THE HEAD OF THE SHORT-LIVED RIGHT WING, NARCO-FINANCED POLITICAL PARTY, MORENA. MEANWHILE, NOT EVEN THE SURRENDER OF OTERO'S FORCES HAS BEEN TOTAL; ONLY HALF OF THE PROMISED 500 FIGHTERS HAVE TURNED THEMSELVES IN SO FAR. THE GOC IS PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED BY THE QUALITY OF THE WEAPONS SURRENDERED. ASIDE FROM DUQUE AND OBVIOUSLY THE GUERRILLAS, THE GOC IS CONCERNED THAT BIG-TIME NARCOS, INCLUDING VICTOR CARRANZA AND LEONIDAS VARGAS, MAY MOVE INTO THE VOID LEFT BY OTERO'S ORGANIZATION. END SUMMARY.

SURRENDER PROVOKES BLOODY FEUD

2. (U) MAGDALENA MEDIO (MIDDLE MAGDALENA RIVER VALLEY) PARAMILITARY LEADER ARIEL OTERO'S RECENT MOVE TO



PAGE 03 BOGOTA 19523 01 OF 03 231654Z SURRENDER HIS FORCES TO COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES (REFTEL) HAS BROUGHT TO A BOIL THE SIMMERING CRISIS AFFECTING HIS ORGANIZATION SINCE THE JULY ASSASSINATION OF HIS PREDECESSOR, HENRY PEREZ. SINCE THE SURRENDERS BEGAN, A TIT-FOR-TAT WAR HAS BROKEN OUT INSIDE THE ORGANIZATION BETWEEN FORCES LOYAL TO OTERO AND THOSE OPPOSING THE SURRENDER. IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS, THREE AREA CITY COUNCILMEN LINKED TO THE GROUPS HAVE BEEN ASSASSINATED, AND A FOURTH GRAVELY WOUNDED, IN THE VENGEFUL, BLOODY FEUD.

OTERO RUNS TO CALI MAFIA FOR PROTECTION

3. (C) THINGS GOT TOO HOT FOR OTERO. STILL RECOVERING FROM A PREVIOUS ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT, HE AND PEREZ' WIDOW AND THEIR RESPECTIVE CHILDREN HAVE FLED PUERTO BOYACA FOR CALI AND THE PROTECTION OF THAT CITY'S TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION. A GOC SOURCE TOLD POLOFF THEY FLEW IN TWO (APPARENTLY NARCO PROVIDED) SMALL CESSNAS;

DISSIDENTS VOW TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE

4. (U) IN A COMMUNIQUE TO THE MEDIA, THE DISSIDENT MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY LEADERS ACCUSED OTERO OF

Current Class:

B1, 1.5(D)

Current Class: Cursent Handling: n/a.

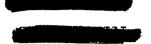
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Channel: n/a

BEING "A TRAITOR" WHO HAD KILLED HENRY PEREZ, AND IS ARMING A DISSIDENT M-19 GROUP. SAYING OTERO WAS AN OUTSIDER WHO HAD SUBVERTED THEIR MOVEMENT, THEY CALLED HIS SURRENDER "A FARCE," ADDING THAT ONLY HIS "PERSONAL GUARD" HAD SURRENDERED AND TURNED IN ONLY THEIR "OBSOLETE ARMS." CALLING THEMSELVES THE AREA'S



PAGE 04 BOGOTA 19523 01 OF 03 231654Z
AUTHENTIC CAMPESINO SELF-DEFENSE GROUPS, THEY VOWED NOT
TO DISARM UNTIL THE GUERRILLAS HAD. THE COMMUNIQUE,
HOWEVER, FAILED TO IDENTIFY THE DISSIDENT LEADERS.

OTERO COULDN'T FILL PEREZ' SHOES

5. (C) IT'S TRUE OTERO (REAL NAME LUIS MENESES) IS A
JOHNNY-COME-LATELY; HE'S NEITHER FROM THE MACDALENA
MEDIO NOR A FARMER.

STUDENT WITH LINKS TO THE PARAMILITARY GROUP, TOLD
POLOFF OTERO'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ORGANIZATION BEGAN
WHEN HE SERVED THE AREA AS AN ARMY OFFICER. AFTER

B1, 1.5(D) B1, 1.5(D)

RETIRING FROM THE MILITARY, OTERO REPORTEDLY RETURNED TO

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AID-01 AMAD-01 LOG-00 INFO SJK-01 DS-00 EB-01 HA-09 H - 01INM-01 INRE-00 INR-01 IO-19 LAB~04 L - 03NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-01 ADS-00 OIG-01 PRS-01 P-01 RP-10 SIL-01 SNP-01 SP-01 SR-01 SS-01 STR-20 TRSE-00 T-01 USIE-00 FMP-01 /088W -----BA82B4 231708Z /38

P 231647Z DEC 91
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1225
INFO DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC
DEA WASHDC
DIRFBI WASHDC
DIRIRONDPC WASHDC//OR//
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

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Current Handling: n/a

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AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVI

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM

USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA

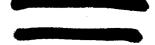
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SECTION 02 OF 03 BOGOTA 19523

DEA FOR AD, AO, AX, DO, OC, OF, OIOA



PAGE 02 BOGOTA 19523 02 OF 03 2317072 CINCSO AND CINCLANT ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR TAGS: PINS, SNAR, PHUM, PGOV, ASEC, CO SUBJECT: CRISIS RIPS MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY GROUP

THE AREA AFTER A BRIEF ABSENCE.

- 6. (C) ACCORDING TO SEVERAL SOURCES, OTERO BROUGHT TO THE PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATION HIS INTELLIGENCE, NATIONAL FOCUS (IN CONTRAST TO THE MYOPIC VIEW OF PEREZ AND OTHER CAMPESINO LEADERS), AND SKILLS AS A TRAINED MILITARY LEADER. HOWEVER, HE LACKED PEREZ' STRENGTH OF PERSONALITY, NATURAL LEADERSHIP ABILITY, AND LINKS TO THE COMMUNITY. ONE THING OTERO HAD GOING FOR HIM WAS THE SUPPORT OF PEREZ' WIDOW, WHOM DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR JAVIER TORRES VELASCO COMPARED TO QUEEN ELIZABETH, SAYING SHE HAS NO REAL POWER, BUT RATHER GREAT SYMBOLIC VALUE IN PUERTO BOYACA. THAT, HOWEVER, PROVED INSUFFICIENT.
- 7. (U) AFTER PEREZ' DEATH, OTERO FAILED TO INHERIT THE CONFIDENCE AREA FARMERS HAD IN PEREZ. MANY STOPPED CONTRIBUTING, LEAVING THE ORGANIZATION IN DECLINE AND UNABLE TO CONTINUE PAYING ITS ARMY OF HIRED GUNMEN. AMONG THOSE SAID TO HAVE CUT THE GROUP OFF WAS DEAD MEDELLIN NARCO GONZALO RODRIGUEZ GACHA'S FAMILY. OTERO QUICKLY LOST PEREZ' CONTROL OF ALL THE AREA'S PARAMILITARY FORCES.

DUQUE MAY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY

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8. (C) SOME OF THE DISSATISFIED AREA FARMERS WENT LOOKING FOR A REPLACEMENT THEY COULD TRUST.

B1, 1.5(D), B6

UNIDENTIFIED LEADER OF THE NON-SURRENDERING AREA PARAMILITARY GROUPS MAY BE IVAN ROBERTO DUQUE GAVIRIA, PRESIDENT OF THE PUERTO BOYACA CITY COUNCIL AND FORMER HEAD OF THE PARAMILITARY GROUPS' PARENT ORGANIZATION, THE RANCHERS AND FARMERS ASSOCIATION OF THE MAGDALENA MEDIO (ACDEGAM). (DUQUE ALSO DIRECTED THEIR NOW DEFUNCT SHORT-LIVED POLITICAL PARTY. THE MOVEMENT FOR NATIONAL RESTORATION, MORENA.) THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE A LOCAL ARMED FORCES COMMANDER IS LINKED TO DUQUE, AND HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN THE RECENT SLAYINGS.

B1, 1.5(D)

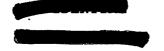
...SO MAY CARRANZA AND NARCO VARGAS ______

9. (C) WITH PEREZ DEAD AND OTERO IN CALI, THE GOC FEARS THAT OTHERS MAY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE VOID. ASIDE FROM DUQUE, AMONG THE POTENTIAL COMPETITORS TO CONTROL THE AREA ARE EMERALD KINGPIN VICTOR CARRANZA AND CAQUETA NARCO LEONIDAS VARGAS THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE DUQUE AND CARRANZA ARE ALLIED. A PRESS REPORT OUOTED AN UNIDENTIFIED DISSIDENT AS SAYING THEY HAD RENEWED THEIR FRIENDSHIP WITH CARRANZA, AND THAT HE HAS OFFERED TO SUPPLY THEM WITH ARMS.

B1, 1.5(D)

GOVERNMENT HAPPY WITH PARTIAL SURRENDER ______

10. (C) MEANWHILE, NOT EVEN THE SURRENDER OF OTERO'S



BOGOTA 19523 02 OF 03 231707Z PAGE 04 FORCES HAS BEEN TOTAL. ESCOBAR HAD TOLD POLOFF DECEMBER 4 HE DIDN'T THINK OTERO WOULD TURN IN EVERYTHING; AREA RANCHERS DOUBT THE GOVERNMENT CAN PROVIDE THE NECESSARY SECURITY. VICE MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT HECTOR RIVEROS SERRATO AND PATINO AGREED THAT THOSE WHO HAD SURRENDERED PROBABLY WERE THE FULL-TIME, PAID GUNMEN WHO PATROLED THE GENERAL AREA, NOT CAMPESINOS WORKING ON INDIVIDUAL FARMS. RIVEROS TOLD POLOFF DECEMBER 16, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOC WASN'T WORRIED THE SURRENDER MAY BE PARTIAL. WHAT'S IMPORTANT, HE SAID, IS THAT THE ASSASSINATION OF

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PEREZ AND THE SURRENDER AND FLIGHT FROM THE AREA OF OTERO MEAN THE GROUPS' MILITARY COMMAND NO LONGER EXISTS.

IMPRESSIVE ARMS, AMMUNITION SURRENDERED

11. (c) OTERO B1, 1.5(B), 1.5(D)

HAD GIVEN THE GOVERNMENT IMPRESSIVE COMPUTERIZED LISTS
OF THE 500 MEMBERS THAT WOULD SUPPENDED AND THE 700 ARMS

OF THE 500 MEMBERS THAT WOULD CHEPENDED AND THE 700 ARMS
THEY WOULD TURN IN. | THE SURRENDERS | B

CONTINUE AT A PACE OF SEVERAL A DAY, ONLY HALF,

B1, 1.5(B), 1.5(D)

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ACTION ARA-01

INFO LOG-00 AID-01 AMAD-01 EB-01 HA-09 SJK-01 DS-00 H-01 INM-01 INRE-00 INR-01 IO-19 LAB-04 L - 03ADS-00 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OIG-01 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-01 PRS-01 P-01 RP-10 SIL-01 SNP-01 SP-01 SR-01 /088W SS-01 STR-20 TRSE-00 T-01USIE-00 FMP-01

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P 231647Z DEC 91

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1226

INFO DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC

DEA WASHDC

DIRFBI WASHDC

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AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM

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CIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

SECTION 03 OF 03 BOGOTA 19523

DEA FOR AD, AO, AX, DO, OC, OF, OIOA

Current Class:

Current Class: Current Handling: n/a Document Number: 1991BOGOTA19523 Page: 7

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PAGE 02 BOGOTA 19523 03 OF 03 231707Z CINCSO AND CINCLANT ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR

TAGS: PINS, SNAR, PHUM, PGOV, ASEC, CO

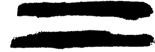
SUBJECT: CRISIS RIPS MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY GROUP

APPROXIMATELY 225, HAVE COME IN SO FAR. ALL THE MEN AND ARMS SURRENDERED ARE LISTED. WHILE THERE WAS NO MUNITIONS LIST, A LOT OF AMMO ALSO HAD BEEN SURRENDERED. INTERESTING, MOST OF THE B1, 1.5(B), 1.5(D) AMMUNITION DOESN'T MATCH THE ARMS; IT'S FOR LARGER B1, 1.5(B), 1.5(D) CALIBER WEAPONS. GOC INTEL HAD PICKED UP THAT A LARGE STOCK OF WEAPONS RECENTLY HAD ARRIVED IN ONE THEORY IS THAT THE GUNS HAVE GONE TO DISSIDENT M-19 GROUPS IN THE CALI AREA. ^JB1, 1.5(B), 1.5(D) MANY GOOD-QUALITY, SOPHISTICATED ARMS HAD BEEN SURRENDERED. WHILE THE GOVERNMENT HAD PLANNED TO BURN THE WEAPONS, AS THEY DID WITH THE M-19'S ARMS, THEY NOW ARE LEANING TOWARD DISTRIBUTING THEM TO POORLY ARMED MILITARY UNITS, SUCH AS THE NAVAL MARINES.

GOVERNMENT WILL TRY TO FILL THE VOID

12. (C) THE GOC NEEDS TO FILL THE SECURITY B1, 1.5(B), 1.5(D) PARAMILITARY GROUPS' PRIVATE JUSTICE/SECURITY IS THAT IT RESPONDS ONLY TO SPECIAL INTERESTS. CALLING NARCOS THE NO. 1 THREAT, THE GUERRILLAS ALSO COULD B1, 1.5(B), 1.5(D) RETURN TO WREAK HAVOC.

13. (U) TO STOP THE HEMORRHAGING IN THE AREA'S SECURITY



PAGE 03 BOGOTA 19523 03 OF 03 231707Z SITUATION, THE GOVERNMENT CONVENED AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF HIGH-RANKING SECURITY OFFICIALS DECEMBER 17 TO DRAW UP A PLAN FOR THE REGION. IN ATTENDANCE WERE DEFENSE MINISTER RAFAEL PARDO RUEDA, NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR RICARDO SANTAMARIA, INSTRUCCION CRIMINAL DIRECTOR CARLOS EDUARDO MEJIA (WHOSE AGENCY IS HANDLING THE JUDICIAL ASPECTS OF THE SURRENDERS), NATIONAL REHABILITATION PLAN (PNR) DIRECTOR CESAR MANUEL NINO, COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE DIRECTOR GEN. MIGUEL ANTONIO GOMEZ, JUDICIAL AND INVESTIGATIVE POLICE (DIJIN) DIRECTOR COL. LUIS

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MONTENEGRO, THE COMMANDERS OF THE TWO ARMY BRIGADES BASED IN THE REGION (4TH AND 14TH), THE POLICE COMMANDERS FOR CUNDINAMARCA, ANTIOQUIA AND BOYACA, AND THE GOVERNORS ELECT OF ANTIOQUIA AND BOYACA. PNR WILL FUND PROGRAMS TO ASSIST THE REINSERTION OF THE SURRENDERED PARAMILITARY FIGHTERS INTO CIVILIAN LIFE.

COMMENT

- 14. (C) IT REMAINS UNCLEAR THAT MAJOR NARCOS HAVE INTEREST IN THE AREA, OR WHAT THAT INTEREST WOULD BE. THE MAGDALENA MEDIO HAS LOST MUCH OF ITS IMPORTANCE FOR THE COCAINE TRADE TO CAQUETA AND PUTUMAYO. CLEARLY THE GUERRILLAS, HOWEVER, ARE INTERESTED IN RETURNING TO THE REGION THEY ONCE TERRORIZED, BUT FROM WHICH THEY WERE EXPELLED BY THE PARAMILITARY GROUPS IN 1985.
- 15. (C) THE MAGDALENA MEDIO, THE ONLY REGION OF THE COUNTRY WHERE THE INSURGENTS HAVE BEEN DEFEATED MILITARILY, THUS BECOMES A MAJOR TEST CASE FOR THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT. IT NEEDS TO MOVE INTO THE

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 19523 03 OF 03 231707Z
AGRICULTURALLY RICH AREA AND PROVIDE THE NECESSARY
GOVERNMENT PRESENCE (NOT JUST SECURITY), THE ABSENCE OF
WHICH WAS THE PROBLEM IN THE FIRST PLACE. KEEPING OUT
THE GUERRILLAS AND NARCOS, THUS MAKING A RESURGENCE OF
PARAMILITARY ACTIVITY UNNECESSARY, WILL BE NO SMALL
ORDER. END COMMENT.

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01 OF 03 PAGE 01 BOGOTA 19523 ACTION ARA-01

PELEASE EXCISE

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AMAD-01 DS-00 EB-01 HA-09 INFO LOG-00 AID-01 SJK-01 H-01 INM-01 INRE-00 INR-01 IO-19 LAB-04 L-03ADS-00 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OIG-01 OMB-01PA-01 PM-01 RP-10 SIL-01 SNP-01 SP-01 SR-01 PRS-01 P~01 STR-20 TRSE-00 T-01USIE-00 FMP-01 /088W SS-01

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EO Citations

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P 231647Z DEC 91

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1224

INFO DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEA WASHDC

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DECLASSIFY DECLASSIFY

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SECTION 01 OF 03 BOGOTA 19523

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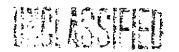
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TAGS: PINS, SNAR, PHUM, PGOV, ASEC, CO

SUBJECT: CRISIS RIPS MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY GROUP

BOGOTA 18523 REF:

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DISSIDENTS VOW TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE

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B1 1.5(1)

OTERO'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ORGANIZATION BEGAN WHEN HE SERVED THE AREA AS AN ARMY OFFICER. AFTER RETIRING FROM THE MILITARY, OTERO REPORTEDLY RETURNED TO



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PAGE 01 ACTION ARA-01	BOGOTA	19523 02	OF 03	231707Z	·	•
INFO LOG-00	AID-01	AMAD-01	SJK-01	DS-00	EB-01	HA-09
H-01	INM-01	INRE-00	INR-01	IO-19	LAB-04	L-03
ADS-00	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OIG-01	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-01
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SS-01	STR-20	TRSE-00	T-01	USIE-00	FMP-01	/088W

----BA82B4 231708Z /38 P 231647Z DEC 91 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1225 INFO DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC DEA WASHDC DIRFBI WASHDC DIRIRONDPC WASHDC//OR// AMEMBASSY CARACAS AMEMBASSY LA PAZ AMEMBASSY LIMA AMEMBASSY QUITO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA CIA WASHDC DIA WASHDC



SECTION 02 OF 03 BOGOTA 19523

DEA FOR AD, AO, AX, DO, OC, OF, OIOA CONFIDENTIAL

BOGOTA 19523 02 OF 03 231707Z CINCSO AND CINCLANT ALSO FOR POLAD

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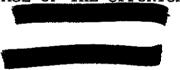
SUBJECT: CRISIS RIPS MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY GROUP

THE AREA AFTER A BRIEF ABSENCE.

6. (C) ACCORDING TO SEVERAL SOURCES, OTERO BROUGHT TO THE PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATION HIS INTELLIGENCE, NATIONAL FOCUS (IN CONTRAST TO THE MYOPIC VIEW OF PEREZ AND OTHER CAMPESINO LEADERS), AND SKILLS AS A TRAINED MILITARY LEADER. HOWEVER, HE LACKED PEREZ' STRENGTH OF PERSONALITY, NATURAL LEADERSHIP ABILITY, AND LINKS TO THE COMMUNITY. ONE THING OTERO HAD GOING FOR HIM WAS THE SUPPORT OF PEREZ' WIDOW, WHOM DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR JAVIER TORRES VELASCO COMPARED TO QUEEN ELIZABETH, SAYING SHE HAS NO REAL POWER, BUT RATHER GREAT SYMBOLIC VALUE IN PUERTO BOYACA. THAT, HOWEVER, PROVED INSUFFICIENT.

7. (U) AFTER PEREZ' DEATH, OTERO FAILED TO INHERIT THE CONFIDENCE AREA FARMERS HAD IN PEREZ. MANY STOPPED CONTRIBUTING, LEAVING THE ORGANIZATION IN DECLINE AND UNABLE TO CONTINUE PAYING ITS ARMY OF HIRED GUNMEN. AMONG THOSE SAID TO HAVE CUT THE GROUP OFF WAS DEAD MEDELLIN NARCO GONZALO RODRIGUEZ GACHA'S FAMILY. OTERO OUICKLY LOST PEREZ' CONTROL OF ALL THE AREA'S PARAMILITARY FORCES.

DUOUE MAY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY



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8. (C) SOME OF THE DISSATISFIED AREA FARMERS WENT LOOKING FOR A REPLACEMENT THEY COULD TRUST. BOTH TORRES AND

TTOLD POLOFF THE NEW UNIDENTIFIED LEADER OF THE NON-SURRENDERING AREA PARAMILITARY GROUPS MAY BE IVAN ROBERTO DUQUE GAVIRIA, PRESIDENT OF THE PUERTO BOYACA CITY COUNCIL AND FORMER HEAD OF THE PARAMILITARY GROUPS' PARENT ORGANIZATION, THE RANCHERS AND FARMERS ASSOCIATION OF THE MAGDALENA MEDIO (ACDEGAM). (DUQUE ALSO DIRECTED THEIR NOW DEFUNCT SHORT-LIVED POLITICAL PARTY, THE MOVEMENT FOR NATIONAL RESTORATION, MORENA.) TORRES SAID THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE A LOCAL ARMED FORCES COMMANDER IS LINKED TO DUQUE, AND HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN THE RECENT SLAYINGS.

...SO MAY CARRANZA AND NARCO VARGAS ______

9. (C) WITH PEREZ DEAD AND OTERO IN CALI, THE GOC FEARS

B1 1.5(A)

THAT OTHERS MAY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE VOID. ASIDE FROM DUQUE, AMONG THE POTENTIAL COMPETITORS TO CONTROL THE AREA ARE EMERALD KINGPIN VICTOR CARRANZA AND CAQUETA NARCO LEONIDAS VARGAS. TORRES SAID THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE DUQUE AND CARRANZA ARE ALLIED. A PRESS REPORT QUOTED AN UNIDENTIFIED DISSIDENT AS SAYING THEY HAD RENEWED THEIR FRIENDSHIP WITH CARRANZA, AND THAT HE HAS OFFERED TO SUPPLY THEM WITH ARMS.

GOVERNMENT HAPPY WITH PARTIAL SURRENDER

10. (C) MEANWHILE, NOT EVEN THE SURRENDER OF OTERO'S



BOGOTA 19523 02 OF 03 231707Z PAGE 04 FORCES HAS BEEN TOTAL. MAD TOLD POLOFF DECEMBER 4 HE DIDN'T THINK OTERO WOULD TURN IN EVERYTHING; AREA RANCHERS DOUBT THE GOVERNMENT CAN PROVIDE THE NECESSARY SECURITY. VICE MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT HECTOR RIVEROS SERRATO AND AGREED THAT THOSE WHO HAD SURRENDERED PROBABLY WERE THE FULL-TIME, PAID GUNMEN WHO PATROLED THE GENERAL AREA, NOT CAMPESINOS WORKING ON INDIVIDUAL FARMS. RIVEROS TOLD POLOFF DECEMBER 16, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOC WASN'T WORRIED THE SURRENDER MAY BE PARTIAL. WHAT'S IMPORTANT, HE SAID, IS THAT THE ASSASSINATION OF PEREZ AND THE SURRENDER AND FLIGHT FROM THE AREA OF OTERO MEAN . THE GROUPS' MILITARY COMMAND NO LONGER EXISTS.

IMPRESSIVE ARMS, AMMUNITION SURRENDERED

11. (C)

B7A B1 1.5(2)

B1 1.5 (1)
B1 1.5 (1)

NNNN



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AMAD-01 INFO LOG-00 AID-01 SJK-01 DS-00 EB-01 HA-09 IO-19 H-01 INM-01 INRE-00 INR-01 _ LAB-04 L-03 OIG-01 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PM-01 ADS-00 PA-01 RP-10 SIL-01 PRS-01 P-01 SR-01 SNP-01 SP-01 TRSE-00 T-01 USIE-00 FMP-01 SS-01 STR-20 /088W ----BA82B8 231709Z /38

P 231647Z DEC 91

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1226

INFO DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC

DEA WASHDC

DIRFBI WASHDC

DIRIRONDPC WASHDC//OR//

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM

USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA

CIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC





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DEA FOR AD, AO, AX, DO, OC, OF, OIOA



PAGE 02 BOGOTA 19523 03 OF 03 231707Z CINCSO AND CINCLANT ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR

TAGS: PINS, SNAR, PHUM, PGOV, ASEC, CO

SUBJECT: CRISIS RIPS MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY GROUP

1

GOVERNMENT WILL TRY TO FILL THE VOID

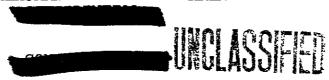
12. (C) TORRES SAID THE GOC NEEDS TO FILL THE SECURITY VOID. AGREED, SAYING THE PROBLEM WITH THE



B 1.5 (1)

PARAMILITARY GROUPS' PRIVATE JUSTICE/SECURITY IS THAT IT RESPONDS ONLY TO SPECIAL INTERESTS. CALLING NARCOS THE NO. 1 THREAT, TORRES SAID THE GUERRILLAS ALSO COULD RETURN TO WREAK HAVOC.

13. (U) TO STOP THE HEMORRHAGING IN THE AREA'S SECURITY



BOGOTA 19523 03 OF 03 231707Z SITUATION, THE GOVERNMENT CONVENED AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF HIGH-RANKING SECURITY OFFICIALS DECEMBER 17 TO DRAW UP A PLAN FOR THE REGION. IN ATTENDANCE WERE DEFENSE MINISTER RAFAEL PARDO RUEDA, NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR RICARDO SANTAMARIA, INSTRUCCION CRIMINAL DIRECTOR CARLOS EDUARDO MEJIA (WHOSE AGENCY IS HANDLING THE JUDICIAL ASPECTS OF THE SURRENDERS), NATIONAL REHABILITATION PLAN (PNR) DIRECTOR CESAR MANUEL NINO, COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE DIRECTOR GEN. MIGUEL ANTONIO GOMEZ, JUDICIAL AND INVESTIGATIVE POLICE (DIJIN) DIRECTOR COL. LUIS MONTENEGRO, THE COMMANDERS OF THE TWO ARMY BRIGADES BASED IN THE REGION (4TH AND 14TH), THE POLICE COMMANDERS FOR CUNDINAMARCA, ANTIQUIA AND BOYACA, AND THE GOVERNORS ELECT OF ANTIOQUIA AND BOYACA. PNR WILL FUND PROGRAMS TO ASSIST THE REINSERTION OF THE SURRENDERED PARAMILITARY FIGHTERS INTO CIVILIAN LIFE.

COMMENT

- 14. (C) IT REMAINS UNCLEAR THAT MAJOR NARCOS HAVE INTEREST IN THE AREA, OR WHAT THAT INTEREST WOULD BE. THE MAGDALENA MEDIO HAS LOST MUCH OF ITS IMPORTANCE FOR THE COCAINE TRADE TO CAQUETA AND PUTUMAYO. CLEARLY THE GUERRILLAS, HOWEVER, ARE INTERESTED IN RETURNING TO THE REGION THEY ONCE TERRORIZED, BUT FROM WHICH THEY WERE EXPELLED BY THE PARAMILITARY GROUPS IN 1985.
- 15. (C) THE MAGDALENA MEDIO, THE ONLY REGION OF THE COUNTRY WHERE THE INSURGENTS HAVE BEEN DEFEATED MILITARILY, THUS BECOMES A MAJOR TEST CASE FOR THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT. IT NEEDS TO MOVE INTO THE



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AGRICULTURALLY RICH AREA AND PROVIDE THE NECESSARY
GOVERNMENT PRESENCE (NOT JUST SECURITY), THE ABSENCE OF
WHICH WAS THE PROBLEM IN THE FIRST PLACE. KEEPING OUT
THE GUERRILLAS AND NARCOS, THUS MAKING A RESURGENCE OF
PARAMILITARY ACTIVITY UNNECESSARY, WILL BE NO SMALL
ORDER. END COMMENT.

BUSBY