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TITLE: SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION -- ESCOBAR'S DISAPPEARANCE,
EDITORIAL COMMENTARY ON GOC REACTIONS AND U.S.

OVERFLIGHTS

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION -- ESCOBAR'S DISAPPEARANCE,
EDITORIAL COMMENTARY ON GOC REACTIONS AND U.S.
OVERFLIGHTS

1. JULY 30 LOCAL DAILIES CARRIED SEVERAL EDITORIALS ON THE GOC'S REACTIONS TO THE ESCAPE OF DRUG KINGPIN PABLO ESCOBAR, AS WELL AS ON THE FLIGHTS OF U.S. MILITARY PLANES OVER MEDELLIN AND ITS SURROUNDING AREAS. THE GOC HAS REPORTEDLY CONFIRMED THAT THESE OVERFLIGHTS WERE REQUESTED AND ARE BEING COORDINATED BY COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES. THE PIECES WERE GENERALLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE GOC.

2. REPRESENTATIVE HEADLINES AND QUOTES FOLLOW:

A. LEADING DAILY EL TIEMPO (LIBERAL PARTY ORIENTED,
CIRC. 245,000):

HEADLINE (1) -- "YES, NATIONAL UNITY."

QUOTES -- "IN THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE MOMENT, THE ONLY ONES WHO MIGHT COME OUT VICTORIOUS ARE THE ONES EVERYONE WANTS TO SEE TAKEN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER: DRUG TRAFFICKERS. THERE WAS A CLEAR EXAMPLE YESTERDAY. MILITARY EXPERTS HAD STARTED A MISSION, ACCOMPLISHED BY THE COLOMBIAN AIR FORCE IN COORDINATION WITH SPECIALIZED U.S. PLANES. THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF HAVOC, MANY COMPLAINTS, MANY CALLS FOR NATIONALISM, A GREAT AMOUNT OF SUSPICION, AND QUESTIONS POSED TO CONGRESSMEN,

REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior
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GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND STREET PEOPLE TO SEE WHETHER NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY WAS BEING VIOLATED. QUESTIONS WERE ALSO ASKED ON WHETHER EVERYBODY HAD BEEN ASKED ABOUT THE USE OF AIRPLANES FROM OTHER NATIONS WITH INFORMATION GATHERING CAPABILITIES THAT COLOMBIA DOESN'T HAVE."

"THE RADIO -- WITHOUT MAKING EXCEPTIONS SO WE DON'T HURT ANYBODY'S SENSIBILITIES -- WAS ONLY LACKING A CALL TO PABLO ESCOBAR TO ASK HIM FOR AN AUTHORIZATION (OF ANY KIND). EVEN THE MAYOR OF ENVIGADO YELLED AT THE TOP OF HIS LUNGS THAT WE WERE ON THE BRINK OF BEING INVADED. SENATOR HUMBERTO PELAEZ, WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE SINKING OF THE BILL THAT WOULD HAVE RATIFIED THE VIENNA CONVENTION AGAINST DRUG TRAFFICKING, WAS VERY DEMONSTRATIVE IN FAVOR OF NATIONALISM."

HEADLINE (2) -- "HEADS ROLLING."

QUOTES -- "AFTER THE INITIAL BUMPS AND CONFUSIONS, THE GOVERNMENT SEEMS TO HAVE PUT ITS ACT IN GEAR. AND ALTHOUGH THE MOST SERIOUS PART IS STILL TRUE -- ESCOBAR ON THE LOOSE -- IT HAS BEEN ACCURATE IN WHAT THE GRINGOS CALL 'DAMAGE CONTAINMENT.' THE DISCHARGE OF TWO GENERALS AND THREE COLONELS AND THE FIRING OF THE VICE-MINISTER OF JUSTICE PROJECT THE FEELING AT LEAST THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS TO ABLE TO REACT STRONGLY AND SANCTION THE FAULTS OF HIS PEOPLE."

"I AM AFRAID THAT THE PRESENCE OF AMERICAN PLANES OVER ANTIOQUIA, ON AN OPERATION OF 'AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY AND TECHNICAL INTELLIGENCE' REQUESTED EXPLICITLY BY THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND CONTROLLED BY THE COLOMBIAN AIR FORCE, COULD LEND ITSELF TO THE WELL KNOWN ANTI-IMPERIALIST TANTRUMS OF SOME PEOPLE. WITH ALL THEIR ATTACKS AGAINST NATIONAL DIGNITY, DRUG TRAFFICKERS VIOLATE MORE OUR SOVEREIGNTY THAN THE HELP THAT THE U.S. MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE AT A GIVEN TIME IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE AN OBJECTIVE THAT SHOULD INTEREST THE WHOLE NATION."

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B. SECOND LEADING DAILY EL ESPECTADOR (LIBERAL PARTY ORIENTED, CIRC. 145,000):

HEADLINE -- "BETWEEN CORRUPTION AND INCOMPETENCE."

QUOTE -- "...ALL OF THE ARGUMENTS THAT THE ENEMIES OF EXTRADITION HAVE BEEN USING ARE NOTHING MORE THAN A FARCE, AND THESE PEOPLE DON'T ACT FOLLOWING IDEOLOGICAL CONVICTIONS. THEY ACT THE WAY THEY DO FOR FEAR OR BRIBERY."

C. ON JULY 29, CONSERVATIVE TABLOID LA PRENSA (OPPOSITION, CIRC. 80,000) HAD CARRIED AN EDITORIAL THAT WAS VERY CRITICAL OF ALL THE EVENTS THAT LED TO ESCOBAR'S ESCAPE. THE JULY 30 EDITION CARRIED A LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR BY THE COMMANDER OF THE ARMY, GENERAL MANUEL MURILLO GONZALEZ, COMPLAINING ABOUT THE EDITORIAL. LA PRENSA ALSO CARRIED A RESPONSE TO THE GENERAL'S LETTER BY THE PAPER'S DIRECTOR JUAN CARLOS PASTRANA.

QUOTE (GEN. MURILLO) -- "IN THE MIDST OF THE HARDSHIPS THAT THIS COUNTRY IS GOING THROUGH, THE MONOLITHIC UNITY OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THEIR OBEDIENCE AND RESPECT FOR THE PRESIDENT, THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, AND THE HIGH COMMAND ARE PRECISELY THE PILLARS ON WHICH THE STABILITY OF THE INSTITUTIONS SEEK SUPPORT."

(MR. PASTRANA) "ACCORDING TO WHAT OUR INTELLIGENCE SOURCES HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND OUT, AND AS IT IS OBVIOUS TO ANY CITIZEN TODAY, LA PRENSA IS NOT THE ONE THAT WANTS TO DESTABILIZE THE ARMED FORCES. RECENT EVENTS HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT THEY HAVE BEEN DESTABILIZED FOR A WHILE NOW BY THE DRUG TRAFFICKERS, AND THEIR LONG REACH HAS EVEN PENETRATED THE TOP BRASS IN THE MILITARY, IN POLITICS, AND IN THE ECONOMY. FROM THESE PAGES WE HAVE OFTEN ASKED FOR A PURGE OF THE ARMED FORCES, NOT TO DESTABILIZE THEM, BUT TO STRENGTHEN THEM BY LIBERATING THEM OF THE PARASITES AND ENEMIES THAT HARM THEM PHYSICALLY AND MORALLY FROM THE INSIDE."

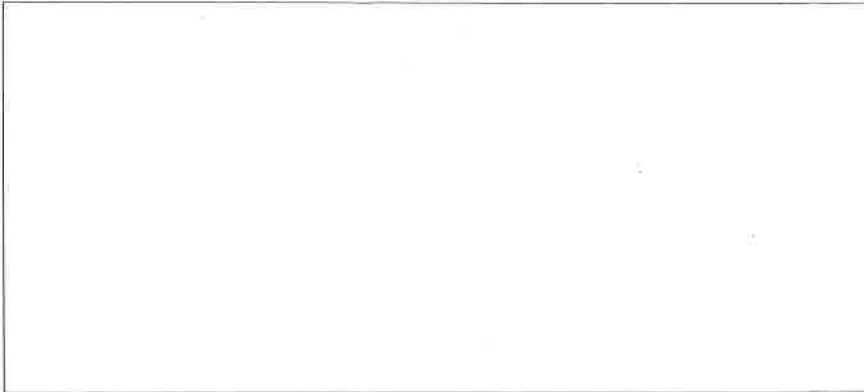
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