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97800934

TITLE: SUBJECT: NARCO HIT SQUAD CAPTURED: NARCOS AMBUSH POLICE:
MORE NEWS OF PERMANENT NARCO-MILITARY CAMPS

SUMMARY

ORIGDATE: 198904072021

SOURCE: STATE

DOCNO: BOGOTA 05131

TEXT:

TAGS: PTER, KJUS, SNAR, PHUM, CO

SUBJECT: NARCO HIT SQUAD CAPTURED: NARCOS AMBUSH POLICE:
MORE NEWS OF PERMANENT NARCO-MILITARY CAMPS

SUMMARY

1. (C) ON APRIL 4 DAS AGENTS RAIDED A BOGOTA HOUSE AND CAPTURED 10 MEN THEY ACCUSE OF BEING HIT-MEN FOR MEDELLIN CARTEL CAPO GONZALO RODRIGUEZ GACHA. IN ANOTHER ACTION A POLICE SQUAD WAS AMBUSHED IN ANTIOQUIA ON APRIL 5; UPON COUNTERATTACKING, THE POLICE KILLED SEVEN GUARDS OF A LARGE COCAINE LABORATORY THOUGHT TO BELONG TO PABLO ESCOBAR GAVIRIA. PRESS REPORTS CLAIM BOTH GROUPS WERE PART OF A NARCO PARAMILITARY FORCE TRAINED BY BRITISH AND ISRAELI MERCENARIES IN THE MAGDELENA MEDIO AREA. THESE TWO ACTIONS ARE INDICATIONS OF GREATER POLICE ACTIVITY IN THE ANTI-NARCOTICS FIELD SINCE THE RESIGNATION/FIRING OF FORMER POLICE CHIEF MEDINA SANCHEZ. END SUMMARY
DAS CAPTURES MAJOR NARCO HIT SQUAD

2. (U) AT 4:00 A.M. APRIL 5, DAS (DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SECURITY) AGENTS ATTACKED A BOGOTA HOUSE, CAPTURING 10 MEN AND KILLING TWO OTHERS. GENERAL MAZA, DIRECTOR OF DAS, ISSUED A STATEMENT SAYING THE GROUP WAS A HIT SQUAD WORKING FOR DRUG CAPO JOSE GONZALO RODRIGUEZ GACHA. HE ADDED THAT THE GROUP WAS IMPLICATED IN OVER 50 KILLINGS. MANY OF THE VICTIMS WERE MEMBERS OF THE LEFTIST PATRIOTIC UNION PARTY, AND INCLUDED 17 TOWNSPEOPLE MASSACRED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF META IN JULY 1988. THREE OF THE ARRESTED MEN ARE ALSO IMPLICATED IN THE FEBRUARY 27 MURDER OF COMMUNIST LEADER TEOFILO FORERO IN BOGOTA. MAZA THOUGHT THE GROUP WAS IN BOGOTA

REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior
Reviewer

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FOR "SOMETHING BIG." A CHECK FOR 2,700,000 COL. PESOS (APPROX USD 7,500) WAS FOUND IN THE HOUSE MADE OUT TO ONE OF THE CAPTURED MEN. ACCORDING TO THE DAS DIRECTOR, THE GROUP HAD BEEN TRAINED NEAR THE MIDDLE MAGDALENA TOWN OF PUERTO BOYACA, A MEDELLIN CARTEL STRONGHOLD, BY FOREIGN TRAINERS. AN INVESTIGATIVE MAGISTRATE IS NOW IN CHARGE OF THE CASE.

NARCOS AMBUSH POLICE COLUMN: POLICE WIN

3. (U) ON APRIL 4, A SPECIALIZED POLICE ANTI-GUERRILLA PLATOON FROM MEDELLIN WAS AMBUSHED 100 MILES SOUTHEAST OF THAT CITY AS IT WAS SEARCHING FOR A LARGE COCAINE LABORATORY. IN A TWELVE HOUR FIREFIGHT, FOUR POLICEMEN AND SEVEN OF THE AMBUSHERS WERE KILLED. THE REST OF THE ATTACKERS FLED. THE POLICE FOUND THE LAB AND DESTROYED FOUR TONS OF COCAINE AND OVER 24,000 GALLONS OF PRECURSOR CHEMICALS. THE POLICE CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR THE REST OF DEFENDERS OF THE LAB. SEVERAL AR-15 AND G-3 ASSAULT RIFLES WERE FOUND AT THE SITE OF THE BATTLE. THE POLICE COLONEL TOLD REPORTERS THAT DOCUMENTS FOUND AT THE LAB INDICATED THAT THE DEFENDERS HAD BEEN TRAINED IN MILITARY TACTICS IN THE NEARBY MAGDALENA MEDIO AREA, AND THAT AT LEAST NINE OTHER "PARAMILITARY" UNITS HAVE PERMANENT BASES IN THE REGION. THE POLICE COLONEL PROMISED THAT THE OTHER SITES WOULD BE ATTACKED AS WELL, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS.

NARCO MILITARY TRAINING CAMPS WITH ENGLISH/ISRAELI STAFF

4. (U) EL ESPECTADOR IN A COMPANION ARTICLE CLAIMED TO HAVE ACCESS TO A DAS REPORT ON ARMED NARCO GROUPS IN THE MAGDALENA RIVER VALLEY (APPARENTLY A MORE DETAILED REPORT THAN THAT DESCRIBED IN 88 BOGOTA 16741). THE DOCUMENT CLAIMS THAT NINE ENGLISH AND FOUR ISRAELI MERCENARIES HAVE CONDUCTED EXPLOSIVE AND TACTICS TRAINING FOR AS MANY AS 2000 MEN. IT ALSO SAID THAT THE FOREIGNERS MIGHT BE INVOLVED IN TRAINING "CONTRA" FORCES IN HONDURAS AND COSTA RICA. THE TRAINED MEN ARE USED FOR PROTECTION OF NARCO INTERESTS, AND AS ANTI-GUERRILLA ATTACK FORCES. SOME UNITS ARE SIMPLY ASSASSINS. THE ARTICLE SAID DAS KNOWS OF AT LEAST ONE SHIPMENT OF 600

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AR-15 ASSAULT RIFLES WHICH WAS DELIVERED TO THE GROUPS.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BOGOTA 05131

SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PTER, KJUS, SNAR, PHUM, CO

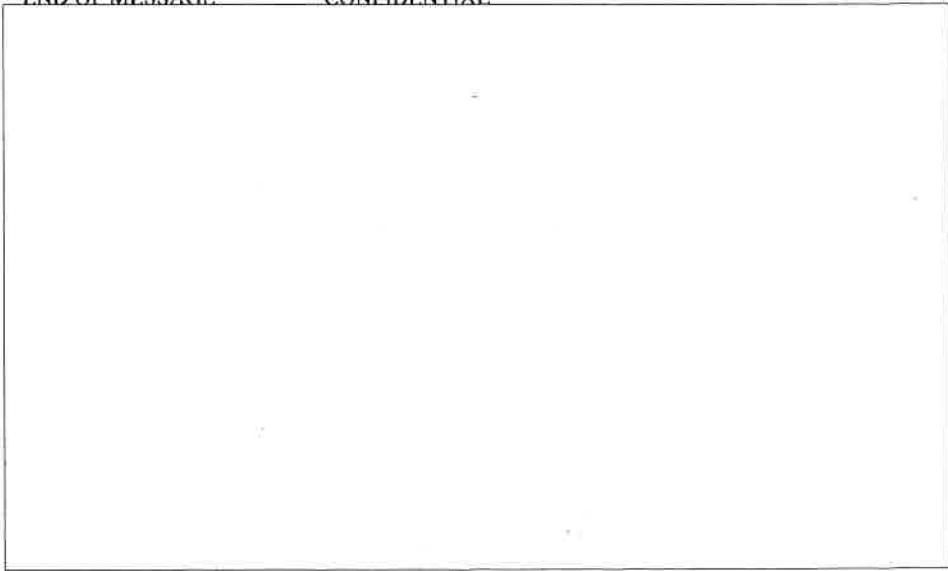
SUBJECT: NARCO HIT SQUAD CAPTURED: NARCOS AMBUSH POLICE:
THE FINANCING COMES FROM NARCO CHIEFS PABLO ESCOBAR,
RODRIGUEZ GACHA, AND VICTOR CARRANZA, IN LEAGUE WITH
THREE RANCHERS: HENRY GAVIRIA, GONZALO PEREZ AND NELSON
LESME.

5. (C) COMMENT: WE ARE HEARING MORE SPECULATION THAT
INCREASED POLICE AND DAS SUCCESS AGAINST NARCO INTERESTS
AND PRIVATE NARCO HIT SQUADS IS A RESULT OF THE FORMER
POLICE CHIEF MEDINA SANCHEZ' "RETIREMENT." HE WAS
SUSPECTED OF LINKS TO MAJOR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS. THE
REPORTS OF THE PERMANENT NARCO-PARAMILITARY TRAINING
CAMPS IN THE PUERTO BOYACA AREA WITH FOREIGN TRAINERS
ARE BECOMING MORE PERSISTENT AND MORE DETAILED. THAT
THE DEFENDERS OF THE ANTIOQUIA LAB ATTEMPTED TO TAKE ON
A SPECIALLY TRAINED COLUMN OF 39 ANTI-INSURGENT POLICE,
AND HELD THEM OFF FOR SO LONG, SHOWS THE EXTENT OF NARCO
CONFIDENCE AND TRAINING. WE HAVE NO HARD INFORMATION
HERE TO SUPPORT THE PUBLIC REPORTS THAT THE MERCENARIES
MIGHT BE INVOLVED WITH THE CONTRAS.

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TOR: 080329Z APR 89 BOGOTA 05131

CLASS: CONFIDENTIAL

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DECLASSON: MR

DOCPREC: R

DOCST: ACTIVE

DOCTYPE: IN

DOCUMENT_ID: 97800934

DOR: 19890408

FROM: FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

GUIDE-UID: 1012/j1995

HEADER: RR RUEIDM

DE RUEHBO #5131/01 0972021

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R <ORIGDTG>072021Z APR 89</ORIGDTG>

<FROM>FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA</FROM>

<TO>TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4578</TO>

INFO RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC

RUEBWJA/DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC

RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC

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RHLBAAA/USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM

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RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 5200

RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 5802

RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 5776

RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ 5344

BT

INPUT_ID: 89 2424365

ORIGIN:

PRODUCER: BOGOTA

RECEIPT DATE: 89 242436519890408032900

SOURCE-INFO: STATE IN R BOGOTA 05131 BOGOTA 198904072021

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