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TITLE: SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - U.S. PLANES IN COLOMBIA
(CONTINUED), BENNETT, DRUG LEGALIZATION, BLACKS IN U.S.
POLITICS

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TEXT:

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POLITICS

REF: A. BOGOTA 16333 B. BOGOTA 05637 C. BOGOTA 05185
D. BOGOTA 05130, E. BOGOTA 04951

1. SUMMARY: CONSERVATIVE DAILY LA PRENSA (OPPOSITION)
4/26 CARRIES A NEWS STORY QUOTING THE LOS ANGELES TIMES
THAT THE PENTAGON DECIDED TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF "DEA
SPY FLIGHTS" IN COLOMBIAN AIR SPACE. STORY, ALONG WITH
U.S. EMBASSY RESPONSE, HAD ALREADY BEEN REPORTED
EXTENSIVELY IN MEDIA HERE (REFTELS) AND APPEARED TO HAVE
DIED UNTIL L.A. TIMES REVIVED IT. EVENING TV NEWSCAST
NOTICIERO DE LAS SIETE 4/25 AND THREE PROVINCIAL
NEWSPAPERS 4/25 ALSO CARRIED REPORTS ON THE U.S. PLANES
STORY, IDENTIFYING THEM AS U.S. AIR FORCE. EL SIGLO
(CONSERVATIVE) SAYS LOS ANGELES TIMES JOURNALISTS HAVE
INFORMATION ON PHONE TAPS BETWEEN COLOMBIA AND THE U.S.
CARACOL RADIO NETWORK 4/26 CARRIED A REPORT ON WILLIAM
BENNETT AND AN ACCUSATION THAT HE HAS BEEN LYING ABOUT
THE RESULTS OF THE WAR ON DRUGS IN THE U.S. LEADING
MEDELLIN DAILY EL COLOMBIANO (CONSERVATIVE) 4/25 CARRIED
A COMMENTARY ON DRUG LEGALIZATION. LEADING DAILY EL
TIEMPO (LIBERAL) 4/26 CARRIES A COMMENTARY ON BLACKS IN
U.S. POLITICS. END SUMMARY.

2. CONSERVATIVE DAILY LA PRENSA (OPPOSITION) 4/26
CARRIES A NEWS STORY ON THE LOS ANGELES TIMES ARTICLE
ABOUT THE PENTAGON'S DECISION TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF
FLIGHTS IN COLOMBIAN AIR SPACE. THE STORY WAS ENTITLED,
"THE MISSION THE U.S. PLANES IN COLOMBIA HAD WAS TO

REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior Reviewer
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SEARCH FOR PABLO ESCOBAR." SUBHEAD: "PRESIDENT BARCO'S GOVERNMENT PERMITTED VIOLATION OF COLOMBIAN AIR SPACE, BEHIND THE BACK OF PUBLIC OPINION." BLOCK QUOTE FOLLOWS:

3. "THE U.S. AWACS RADAR AND C-130 PLANES THAT FLEW IN COLOMBIAN AIR SPACE HAD THE MISSION OF PICKING UP INFORMATION ON THE EXTENT OF DRUG TRAFFICKING AND ITS TACTICS...WHITE HOUSE SOURCES SAID THAT A U.S. PILOT MADE A SERIOUS MISTAKE BY ALLOWING HIS PLANE TO BE SEEN BY COMMERCIAL AIRLINER CREWS, WHO DENOUNCED THE PRESENCE OF DEA PLANES...THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AERONAUTICS, YEZID CASTANO, CONFIRMED LAST FEBRUARY THAT TWO U.S. AEROCOMMANDER PLANES WERE IN COLOMBIAN TERRITORY BUT HE DENIED THAT THEIR MISSION WAS TO PHOTOGRAPH PLANTATIONS, LABS AND PROPERTIES BELONGING TO DRUG TRAFFICKERS."

4. ACCORDING TO LA PRENSA, THE LOS ANGELES TIMES ARTICLE SAYS THAT THE PENTAGON DECIDED TO DECREASE U.S. PLANE FLIGHTS AFTER MEDIA REPORTS THAT A U.S. AIRCRAFT HAD ALMOST COLLIDED WITH TWO COMMERCIAL AIRLINERS. PREVIOUS MEDIA COVERAGE HERE (REFTELS) HAD SAID THAT, ACCORDING TO SOME COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES, A USAF C-130 HAD VIOLATED COLOMBIAN AIR SPACE AND HAD ALMOST CAUSED AN ACCIDENT WITH THE COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS. SOME REPORTS SAID PLANE HAD GOC PERMISSION TO BE IN COLOMBIAN AIR SPACE BUT HAD GOTTEN OFF COURSE WHILE ON SEARCH AND RESCUE PRACTICE. LEADING DAILY EL TIEMPO (LIBERAL) AND COLOMBIAN NEWS AGENCY COLPRENSA REPORTED LAST MONTH THAT U.S. PLANES HAD PARTICIPATED IN ACTUAL SEARCH AND RESCUE MISSIONS IN COORDINATION WITH COLOMBIA. ONE TELEVISION REPORT (REFTEL B) ON 4/11 SAID THAT THE PILOT OF THE C-130 HAD BEEN RELIEVED OF HIS DUTIES BY THE U.S. AIR FORCE.

5. THREE LEADING PROVINCIAL DAILIES 4/25, EL HERALDO AND LA LIBERTAD FROM BARRANQUILLA AND VANGUARDIA LIBERAL UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 BOGOTA 06443

USIA FOR P/M, P/PF, P/PFL, P/FW, P/FN, P/G, AR, VOA/BRL

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STATE FOR ARA/P, ARA/AND, INM - C. SHAW

WHITEHOUSE FOR ONDCP HAMILTON

SECDEF FOR OASD (PA)

DEA HEADQUARTERS FOR CPP/FRANK SHULTS

AMEMBASSY PANAMA FOR USIS

SOUTHCOM FOR PAO AND POLAD

E.O. 12356: N/A

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - U.S. PLANES IN COLOMBIA FROM BUCARAMANGA, AS WELL AS EVENING TV NEWSCAST NOTICIERO DE LAS SIETE 4/25, ALSO CARRIED STORIES ON THE L.A. TIMES ARTICLE.

6. CONSERVATIVE DAILY EL SIGLO (OPPOSITION - OWNED BY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ALVARO GOMEZ) HAS A STORY THAT SAYS LOS ANGELES TIMES JOURNALISTS HAVE INFORMATION ON PHONE TAPS BETWEEN COLOMBIA AND THE U.S. ACCORDING TO EL SIGLO, L.A. TIMES JOURNALISTS ALSO HAVE INFORMATION THAT DRUG LORD PABLO ESCOBAR IS PART OWNER OF "SAM" AIRLINES. STORY SAYS THAT L.A. TIMES JOURNALISTS HAVE BEEN LEAKED INFORMATION ON LATIN AMERICA BY WASHINGTON SOURCES WHICH THEY IDENTIFY AS CIA OR DEA. THE STORY SAYS THAT IN TURN, THESE SOURCES RETRANSMIT DATA THEY GET FROM THEIR AGENTS IN THE FIELD.

7. CARACOL RADIO NETWORK, DURING ITS 4/26 MORNING NEWSCAST, CARRIED A REPORT BY ITS HOUSTON CORRESPONDENT, WHO SAID THAT DRUG CZAR WILLIAM BENNETT HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF LYING ABOUT INFORMATION AND STATISTICS ON THE PROGRESS OF THE WAR ON DRUGS IN THE U.S.

8. LEADING MEDELLIN DAILY EL COLOMBIANO (CONSERVATIVE - OWNED BY THE CITY'S MAYOR, JUAN GOMEZ MARTINEZ) 4/25 CARRIED A COMMENTARY BY COLUMNIST ELIAS VELEZ GONZALEZ, FAVORING DRUG LEGALIZATION. BLOCK QUOTE FOLLOWS:

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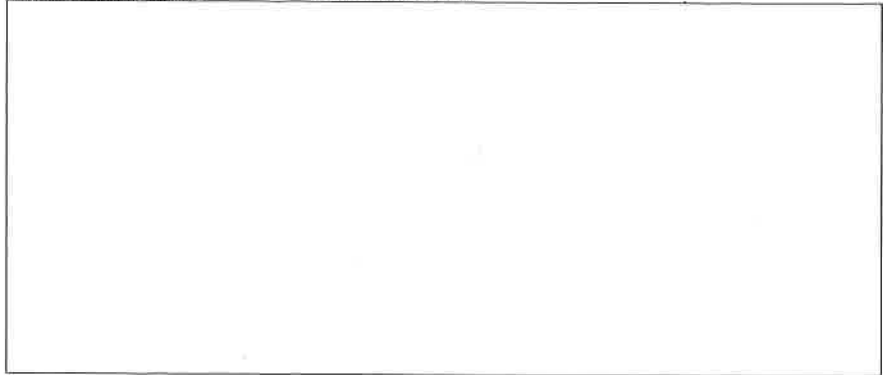
9. "SO LONG AS DRUG TRAFFICKING IS A GREAT BUSINESS, THE SIMPLY REPRESSIVE MEASURES ARE NOT GOING TO FINISH IT...THE U.S., WITH ITS POLICY OF REPRESSION AGAINST SUPPLY, HAS MADE OF DRUGS THE MOST FABULOUS OF BUSINESSES AND HAS CREATED THE GREAT PROBLEM OF DRUG TRAFFICKING AND ALL THE CORRUPTION THAT COMES WITH IT."

10. LEADING DAILY EL TIEMPO (LIBERAL) 4/26 CARRIES A COMMENTARY ON BLACKS IN U.S. POLITICS. THE PIECE STARTS BY QUOTING PRESIDENT BUSH, WHO SAID AT A DINNER IN WASHINGTON THAT "THE COUNTRY IS NOT FAR FROM ELECTING A BLACK PRESIDENT." BLOCK QUOTE FOLLOWS:

11. "(THE BLACKS) HAVE DEVELOPED METHODS IN ORDER TO WIN THE TRUST OF THE PUBLIC AS LEADERS OF AN AUTHENTIC DEMOCRACY, A PUBLIC THAT STUDIES THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THOSE RUNNING FOR PUBLIC OFFICE, WITHOUT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE COLOR OF THEIR SKINS." (END).

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END OF MESSAGE UNCLASSIFIED



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TOR: 261951Z APR 90 BOGOTA 06443

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CONTROLS: UNCLAS BOGOTA 06443 USIA FOR P/M, P/PF, P/PFL, P/FW, P/FN, P/G, AR, VOA/BRL STATE FOR ARA/P, ARA/AND, INM - C. SHAW WHITEHOUSE FOR ONDCP HAMILTON SECDEF FOR OASD (PA) DEA HEADQUARTERS FOR CPP/FRANK SHULTS AMEMBASSY PANAMA FOR USIS SOUTHCOM FOR PAO AND POLAD E.O. 12356: N/A

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