

SECRET

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TITLE: SUBJECT: PABLO ESCOBAR BLAMES CALI CARTEL FOR DEATH OF
RODRIGUEZ GACHA

ORIGDATE: 199001242120

SOURCE: STATE

DOCNO: BOGOTA 01068

TEXT:

TAGS: SNAR, CO

SUBJECT: PABLO ESCOBAR BLAMES CALI CARTEL FOR DEATH OF
RODRIGUEZ GACHA

RELEASED IN PART B3 CIA
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1. SECRET NOFORN--ENTIRE TEXT

2. IN A LENGTHY LETTER TO THE EDITOR PUBLISHED IN THE
JANUARY 24 EDITION OF LEADING BOGOTA DAILY EL TIEMPO,
MEDELLIN CARTEL KINGPIN PABLO ESCOBAR CLAIMS THAT AN
MEMBER OF THE CALI CARTEL, IDENTIFIED AS JORGE VELASQUEZ
(ALIAS EL NAVEGANTE), BETRAYED CARTEL LEADER JOSE
GONZALO RODRIGUEZ GACHA TO THE AUTHORITIES. RODRIGUEZ
GACHA WAS KILLED IN A POLICE RAID ON DECEMBER 15.
ESCOBAR ALSO SAID THAT A CALI CARTEL TIP HAD LED TO THE
NOVEMBER 1987 ARREST OF THE THIRD TOP FIGURE IN THE
CARTEL, JORGE LUIS OCHOA. OCHOA WAS SUBSEQUENTLY
RELEASED.

3. ESCOBAR DENIED A PUBLIC CLAIM BY THE SECURITY FORCES
THAT SECOND LEVEL FIGURES IN THE CARTEL--ANGERED BY THE
CRACKDOWN THAT HIS VIOLENT ANTI-GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN HAD
BROUGHT ABOUT--WERE DISTANCING THEMSELVES FROM HIS
LEADERSHIP. ESCOBAR NOTED THAT HE HAD REJECTED SEVERAL
"PEACE PROPOSALS" FROM THE CALI CARTEL, DEEMING THEM
"INCONVENIENT" AND "INOPPORTUNE." NEVERTHELESS,
PRESUMABLY WITH HIS OWN EFFORTS TO PUSH THE GOVERNMENT
INTO A "DIALOGUE" IN MIND, ESCOBAR WENT ON TO SAY THAT
"I HAVE NEVER REJECTED DIALOGUE (BETWEEN THE TWO
CARTELS) AS A ... SOLUTION.

4. COMMENT: INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY
STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT THE SECURITY SERVICES LOCATED
RODRIGUEZ GACHA THROUGH THEIR OWN INTELLIGENCE SOURCES,

REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior
Reviewer

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1

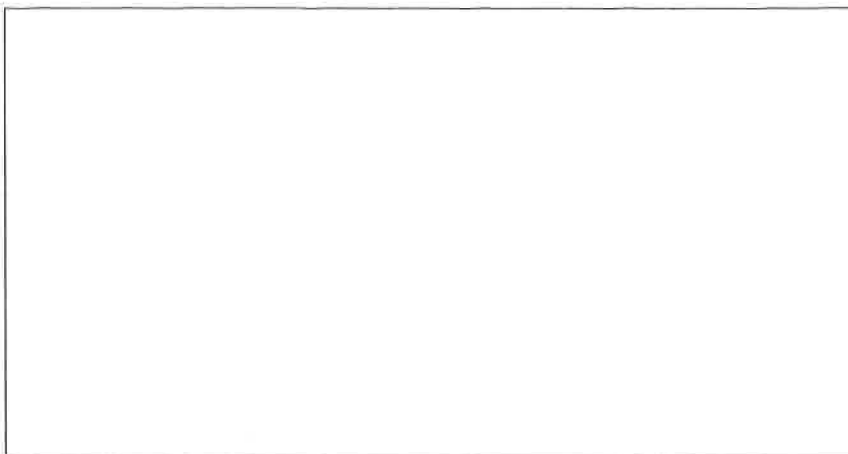
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AND THAT ESCOBAR'S CLAIMS OF CALI CARTEL INVOLVEMENT ARE UNFOUNDED. NEVERTHELESS, ESCOBAR MAY WELL BELIEVE THAT THE CALI GROUP PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN HIS COLLEAGUE'S DEATH. THE TWO CARTELS APPEAR TO HAVE ENGAGED IN VIOLENT CONFLICT PRIOR TO MID-1988, GOING AS FAR AS SENDING HIT SQUADS TO KILL EACH OTHER'S LEADERS. ALTHOUGH WE ARE UNAWARE OF ANY CURRENT BLACK PROPAGANDA OPERATIONS, WE HAVE, IN THE PAST, HEARD REPORTS OF GOVERNMENT LEAKS OF FALSE INFORMATION DESIGNED TO EXACERBATE THE CALI-MEDELLIN DISPUTE. THE EMBASSY HAS CONFIRMED THE CALI CARTEL PEACE OFFERS, BUT THE MEDELLIN CAPO APPARENTLY REMAINS TOO SUSPICIOUS OF THE CALI CARTEL TO ACCEPT THEM.

MCNAMARA
END OF MESSAGE

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3