

CONFIDENTIAL

22465247

TITLE: SUBJECT: MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY HEAD OTERO SLAIN

ORIGDATE: 199201102240

SOURCE: STATE

DOCNO: BOGOTA 00454

TEXT:

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

SUBJECT: MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY HEAD OTERO SLAIN

RELEASED IN PART B3 CIA
PERS/ORG

REF: A) 91 BOGOTA 19523, B) 91 BOGOTA 18523

1. CONFIDENTIAL -- ENTIRE TEXT.

2. MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY LEADER ARIEL OTERO (REAL NAME LUIS MENESES), THE TARGET OF SEVERAL ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS SINCE HE TOOK OVER IN JULY FOR THE SLAIN HENRY PEREZ, WAS FOUND DEAD IN PUERTO BOYACA EARLY JANUARY 10. HE APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN EXECUTED; IN ADDITION TO FACIAL GUNSHOT WOUNDS, HIS BODY SHOWED SIGNS OF TORTURE. LYING ON THE BODY WAS A CARD SAYING "THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS TO TRAITORS."

3. DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR JAVIER TORRES, WHOSE AGENCY NEGOTIATED THE DECEMBER SURRENDER OF OTERO AND 250 OF HIS MILITANTS (REFTELS), TOLD POLOFF JANUARY 10 HE WAS AWAITING THE REPORT OF THE JUDICIAL TEAM RECOVERING THE BODY. IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER OTERO WAS SLAIN AT THE SPOT OR HIS BODY PLACED THERE. TORRES SAID OTERO'S UNCONFIRMED RETURN IN PUERTO BOYACA, WHICH HE FLED IN MID-DECEMBER FOR CALI AND THE PROTECTION OF THAT CITY'S TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION, IS A SURPRISE TO THE GOVERNMENT.

4. COMMENT: THERE ARE TWO HYPOTHESES ABOUT OTERO'S DEATH. IN A JANUARY 6 COMMUNIQUE DENIED BY PABLO ESCOBAR (SEPTTEL), "THE EXTRADITABLES" CLAIMED OTERO HAD AGREED TO CARRY OUT A CALI CARTEL PLOT AGAINST THE MEDELLIN MAFIA, A CHARGE OTERO LATER DENIED. IT'S THEREFORE POSSIBLE ESCOBAR HAD OTERO KILLED. THE SECOND POSSIBILITY IS THAT OTERO FELL VICTIM (NOT THE FIRST) TO

REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior
Reviewer

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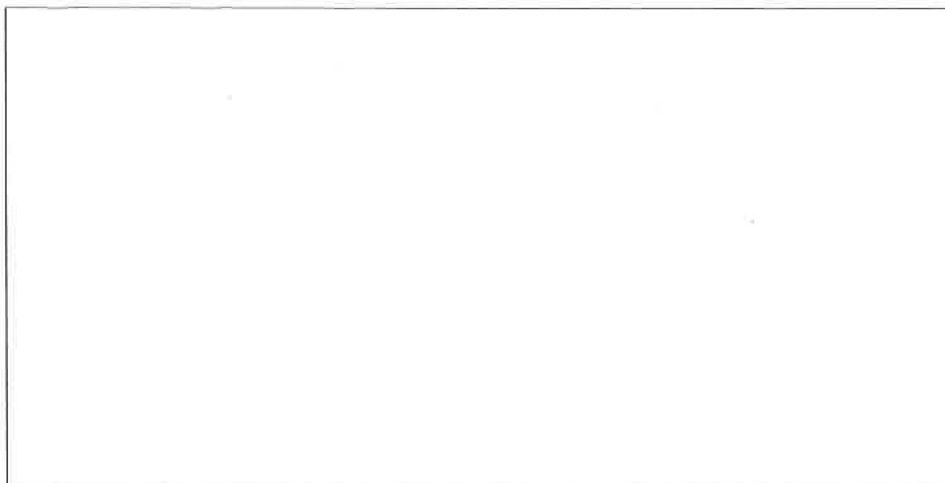
HIS ONGOING BLOOD FEUD WITH MAGDALENA MEDIO PARAMILITARY LEADERS OPPOSED TO HIS ATTEMPT TO ORCHESTRATE THE ORGANIZATIONS' SURRENDER. THE DISSIDENTS HAVE ACCUSED HIM PUBLICLY OF BEING A TRAITOR. END COMMENT.

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END OF MESSAGE

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<FROM>FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA</FROM>
<TO>TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1652</TO>
INFO RUEBWJA/DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC
RUEHNA/DEA WASHDC
RUEHFB/DIRFBI WASHDC
RHEHOND/DIRIRONDPD WASHDC//OR//
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