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TITLE: SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION -- SOUTHCOM COMMANDER DISCUSSES
U.S. DRUG OPERATIONS IN COLOMBIA

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TEXT:

TAGS: OPRC, SNAR, ASEC, DEA, MOPS, PGOV, PREL, US, CO

COMBINE: COMPLETE

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION -- SOUTHCOM COMMANDER DISCUSSES
U.S. DRUG OPERATIONS IN COLOMBIA

1. THE MAY 3 EDITION OF PASTRANA FAMILY OWNED
CONSERVATIVE DAILY TABLOID "LA PRENSA" (CIRC 95,000) FOR
A THIRD DAY IN A ROW CARRIED AN ARTICLE CRITICAL OF USG
PARTICIPATION IN THE DRUG WAR IN COLOMBIA. IN THIS
CASE, THE ARTICLE USED ALLEGED STATEMENTS SUPPOSEDLY BY
THE USSOUTHCOM COMMANDER ABOUT THE DRUG WAR IN COLOMBIA
TO PAINT THE USG AS EXERTING EXTRATERRITORIAL CONTROL IN
COLOMBIA AT THE EXPENSE OF COLOMBIAN SOVEREIGNTY.

2. FOLLOWING ARE THE HEADLINE TREATMENT AND SELECTED
QUOTES FROM THE ARTICLE::

A. FRONT PAGE -- "THE CHIEF OF THE U.S. SOUTHERN
COMMAND IN PANAMA ADMITTED THAT MILITARY MEMBERS FROM
HIS COUNTRY ARE IN THE FIELD IN COLOMBIA HUNTING FOR
PABLO ESCOBAR. THE GOC STATED IN NEW YORK THAT THE
LOCATION OF THE DRUG LORD IS KNOWN."

HEADLINE -- "IT WAS SUSPECTED FROM THE BEGINNING (I.E.,
THE PAPER'S PREVIOUS ASSERTION THAT THE USG IS DIRECTING
THE DRUG WAR IN COLOMBIA)."

B. NATIONAL SECTION STORY:

SUBHEADLINE -- "THE CHIEF OF THE U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND
IN PANAMA ADMITTED THAT MILITARY FORCES FROM HIS COUNTRY
CAN BE FOUND IN THE COLOMBIA ON THE TRAIL OF ESCOBAR."

REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior
Reviewer

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HEADLINE -- "GRINGOS DIRECT THE ESCOBAR SEARCH TASK FORCE."

SUBHEADLINE -- "THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT TOLD A NEW YORK NEWSPAPER THAT IT KNOWS THE DETAILS OF ESCOBAR'S SUBTERRANEAN HIDEOUT, BUT DID NOT EXPLAIN WHY HE HAS NOT BEEN CAPTURED."

QUOTE -- "U.S. GENERAL GEORGE JOULWAN, COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND IN PANAMA ADMITTED TO THE PRESS IN MIAMI THIS PAST FRIDAY THAT MILITARY MEMBERS FROM HIS COUNTRY ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE FORCES TRYING TO CAPTURE PABLO ESCOBAR."

"HE ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS INVOLVED -- THROUGH GIVING INTELLIGENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS AID -- IN THE CAPTURE OF AT LEAST 9 OF ESCOBAR LIEUTENANTS DURING THE LAST FEW MONTHS."

"U.S. MILITARY MEMBERS, AS HAS BEEN WELL KNOWN IN BOGOTA, MAKE UP PART OF THAT CALL THE ESCOBAR SEARCH SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION -- SOUTHCOM COMMANDER DISCUSSES U.S. DRUG OPERATIONS IN COLOMBIA TASK FORCE, A 6000 PERSON ORGANIZATION THAT HAS FAILED TO CAPTURE THE CHIEF OF THE MEDELLIN CARTEL DURING THE LAST TEN MONTHS."

"THE SEARCH TASK FORCE IS BASICALLY DIRECTED BY THE DEA, AN ORGANIZATION THAT COORDINATES THE TASK FORCE'S MOVEMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES."

"RELIABLE SOURCES HAVE STATED THAT U.S. JOURNALISTS WHO HAVE BEEN ON THE SCENE AND FILMED ACTIONS OF THE ESCOBAR SEARCH TASK FORCE -- THE ONLY JOURNALISTS WHO WERE ABLE TO DO SO -- WERE ALLOWED TO DO SO BECAUSE OF PERMISSION THEY HAD RECEIVED FROM THE MAIN OFFICE OF THE DEA."

QUOTE -- "ON ANOTHER ISSUE, ACCORDING TO A REPORT YESTERDAY, SUNDAY, IT IS KNOWN THAT THE FUGITIVE

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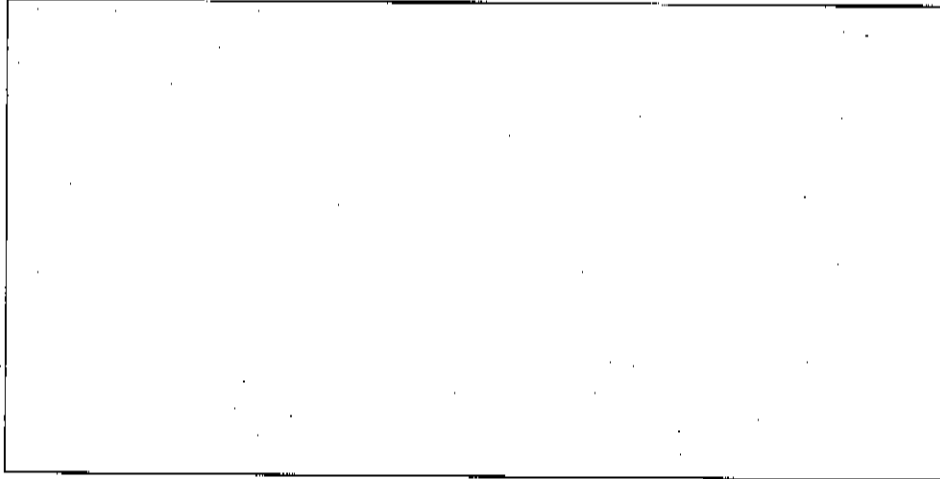
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COLOMBIAN DRUG TRAFFICKER PABLO ESCOBAR HAS TAKEN REFUGE IN A FORTIFIED UNDERGROUND HIDEOUT SOMEWHERE NEAR THE CITY OF MEDELLIN WHERE HE HAS RESERVES TO LAST FOR MONTHS."

"SOURCES CLOSE TO THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT TOLD THE 'NEW YORK NEWSDAY' DAILY NEWSPAPER THAT ESCOBAR HAS CONSTRUCTED 'CATACOMBS STOCKED WITH SUPPLIES AND A SYSTEM OF VENTILATION WHICH WOULD ALLOW HIM TO LAST FOR MONTHS' IN THIS HIDEOUT."

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END OF MESSAGE UNCLASSIFIED



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