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TITLE: SUBJECT: THE NATIONAL POLICE AND THE DIANA TURBAY
OPERATION--AN UPDATE
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SUBJECT: THE NATIONAL POLICE AND THE DIANA TURBAY
OPERATION--AN UPDATE

REF: A) BOGOTA 2424 B) BOGOTA 3250 C) BOGOTA 5336

1. SECRET -- ENTIRE TEXT.
2. BEGIN SUMMARY: COLOMBIA'S INDEPENDENT WATCHDOG PROCURADURIA HAS FILED ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES AGAINST FIVE NATIONAL POLICE OFFICERS FOR GRAVE IRREGULARITIES DURING THE DISASTROUS JANUARY OPERATION WHICH LEFT DIANA TURBAY DEAD. THE HIGH COMMAND OF THE NATIONAL POLICE IS, HOWEVER, IS NOT ACCUSED OF WRONGDOING. END SUMMARY.
3. ON MAY 7 JAIME CAMACHO, PROCURADOR DELEGATE FOR THE JUDICIAL POLICE, FILED ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES AGAINST FIVE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL POLICE FOR GRAVE IRREGULARITIES DURING THE JANUARY POLICE RAID DURING WHICH NARCO HOSTAGE DIANA TURBAY WAS KILLED BY HER CAPTORS. CAMACHO TOLD POLOFF ON MAY 27 THAT HE HAD LARGELY ACCEPTED THE PROCURADURIA'S OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS REPORT (OUTLINED IN REF A) ON THE INCIDENT.
4. THOSE CHARGED ARE COL. LINO PINZON, THE SENIOR NATIONAL POLICE OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR ANTI-CARTEL OPERATIONS IN THE MEDELLIN AREA, AND FOUR OTHER POLICE OFFICERS--A MAJOR, A CAPTAIN, A LIEUTENANT, AND A SUB-LIEUTENANT. THE FIVE WERE CHARGED WITH NOT PASSING INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRUE NATURE OF THE OPERATION TO

**REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior
Reviewer**

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THEIR SUPERIORS, IRREGULARITIES DURING THE OPERATION, AND UNNECESSARY USE OR ORDERING UNNECESSARY USE OF FIREARMS.

5. THE CAPTAIN, THE LIEUTENANT AND THE SUB-LIEUTENANT ARE ALSO CHARGED WITH VARYING DEGREES OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE POSSIBLE EXTRA-JUDICIAL EXECUTIONS OF THREE INDIVIDUALS WHOSE BODIES WERE FOUND IN THE AREA. ONE OF THE INDIVIDUALS, JOSE DOMINGO CORREA, WAS CAPTURED BY THE POLICE IN MEDELLIN SHORTLY BEFORE THE OPERATION, ACCORDING TO TESTIMONY BY HIS FAMILY, TESTIMONY CAMACHO ADMITS IS NOT FULLY TRUSTWORTHY. POLICE CLAIM HE WAS KILLED AT THE SCENE IN A GUNBATTLE.

6. POLICE ALSO CLAIM A SECOND INDIVIDUAL, JOSE HUMBERTO VASQUEZ, WAS CAPTURED AT THE SCENE AND SUBSEQUENTLY RELEASED. VASQUEZ'S FAMILY, HOWEVER, SAYS HE WAS CAPTURED IN MEDELLIN SHORTLY BEFORE THE OPERATION. THE DAY AFTER THE OPERATION HE WAS FOUND MURDERED. CAMACHO SAYS THE POLICE THEORY THAT VASQUEZ WAS KILLED BY THE NARCOS TO SILENCE HIM IS PLAUSIBLE. IT IS DIFFICULT, HOWEVER, TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE POLICE WOULD RELEASE AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAD SERVED AS ONE OF TURBAY'S GUARDS. THE LIEUTENANT IS CHARGED WITH FOLLOWING IMPROPER PROCEDURE IN NOT TURNING VASQUEZ OVER TO A JUDGE.

7. THE MOST DAMAGING ALLEGATION IS THE APPARENT EXTRA-JUDICIAL EXECUTION OF JOSE DOMINGO CORREA. CORREA WAS SEEN IN POLICE CUSTODY BY SEVERAL WITNESSES BEFORE TURNING UP DEAD. HE WAS A LOCAL RESIDENT POLICE APPARENTLY MISTOOK FOR ONE OF TURBAY'S CAPTORS.

8. THE OPERATION WAS OSTENSIBLY DESIGNED TO CAPTURE NARCO KINGPIN PABLO ESCOBAR. PINZON DENIED TO PROCURADURIA INVESTIGATORS THAT HE KNEW TURBAY WAS AT THE RANCH TARGETED BY THE OPERATION. CAMACHO, HOWEVER, IS CONVINCED THIS IS A LIE AND THAT THE OPERATION WAS REALLY A RESCUE MISSION DESIGNED TO FREE TURBAY. THE HIGH COMMAND OF THE NATIONAL POLICE DENIED TO THE PROCURADURIA KNOWLEDGE OF THE OPERATION'S TRUE PURPOSE.

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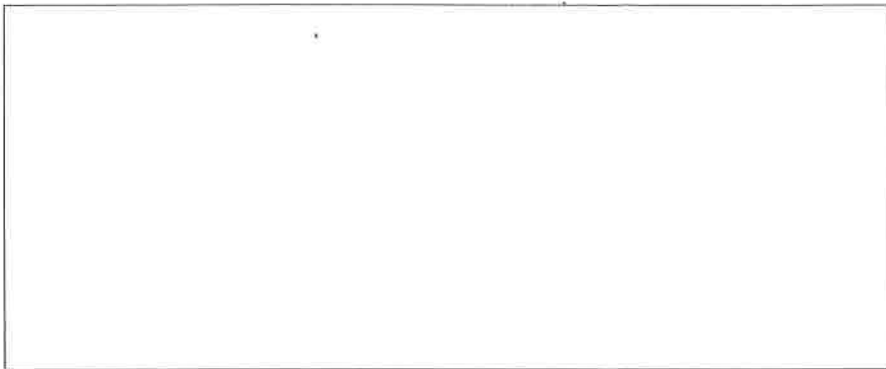
CAMACHO SAID HE HAS "NO CHOICE" BUT TO BELIEVE THESE DENIALS. BECAUSE OF THE NECESSITY TO PERSONALLY NOTIFY THE ACCUSED, ONE OF WHOM IS NOW STUDYING IN ARGENTINA, AND THE NEED TO GATHER ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE, CAMACHO, WHO WILL DECIDE WHETHER TO PUNISH OR ACQUIT THE ACCUSED, DOES NOT EXPECT THIS CASE TO BE SOON RESOLVED.

9. POLICE COOPERATION WITH PROCURADURIA INVESTIGATORS IN THE TURBAY CASE HAS BEEN "GOOD," ACCORDING TO THE PROCURADOR DELEGATE. CAMACHO SAYS HE HAS A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH SENIOR POLICE OFFICIALS. HE SPEAKS ESPECIALY HIGHLY OF COLONEL LUIS MONTENEGRO, HEAD OF DIJIN, THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATIVE UNIT OF THE NATIONAL POLICE.

10. COMMENT: WE AGREE THE ASSAULT WAS ACTUALLY DESIGNED TO LIBERATE TURBAY AND WE CONTINUE TO THINK IT UNLIKELY PINZON KEPT HIS SUPERIORS IN THE DARK ABOUT THE TRUE NATURE OF SUCH A MAJOR OPERATION. NEVERTHELESS, UNLESS PINZON CHANGES HIS STORY, POLICE COMMANDER MIGUEL ANTONIO GOMEZ PADILLA AND OTHER TOP RANKING POLICE OFFICIALS WILL NOT FACE PROCURADURIA DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS. HOBBS

END OF MESSAGE

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