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ACTION ARA-00

INFO LDG-00, ADS-00, AID-00, INR-05, SS-00, H-01, NSCE-00

NSAE-00, SS0-00, HA-09, L-03, TRSE-00, PM-10, PA-01

DNB-01, INM-08, INRE-00, CA-02, USIE-00, SP-02, SNP-01

PRS-01, DS-01, SCT-03, P-02, T-01, /051 W

0-2716072 DEC 89

FM AMBASSAD0Y BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1585

INFO SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

USCINCSP QUARRY HEIGHTS PM PRIORITY

AMBASSAD0Y LIMA

AMBASSAD0Y CARACAS

AMBASSAD0Y LA PAZ

AMBASSAD0Y QUITO

DIA WASHDC

CIA WASHDC

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SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356; DECL: OADR

TAGS: PTER, PINS, SNAR, CO

SUBJECT: RODRIGUEZ GACHA FOLLOWERS STAGE A PRISON MUTINY

AND TWO JAIL BREAKS

REF: BOGOTA 19694

1. (U) A "WAR" ATMOSPHERE CONTINUES TO PREVAIL IN

COLOMBIAN JAILS AMONG IMPRISONED FOLLOWERS OF THE LATE

NARCO KINGPIN GONZALO RODRIGUEZ GACHA (SEE REFTEL

PARA 3). INMATES GRABBED HOSTAGES AND TOOK OVER THE "LA

PICOTA" PRISON IN BOGOTA, WHILE FIFTEEN ESCAPED FROM TWO

OTHER PRISONS IN VALLE DEL CAUCA AND ANTIOQUIA ON


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2. (U) AT LA PICOTA, TWELVE ARMED MEMBERS OF THE
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3. (U) FIFTEEN INMATES ESCAPED FROM THE BUENAVENTURA JAIL (VALLE DEL CAUCA IN THE SOUTHWEST) AND THE ZARAGOZA JAIL IN ANTIOQUIA DEPARTMENT DECEMBER 26. ALL THE FUGITIVES WERE SERVING SENTENCES FOR MAJOR CRIMES AND POLICE IN BOTH DEPARTMENTS HAVE INSTITUTED MAJOR TRACKDOWN OPERATIONS TO RECAPTURE THEM.

4. (C) COLONEL JOSE LEDNIDAS CALEO OF THE BOGOTA METROPOLITAN POLICE TOLD POLOFF DECEMBER 27 THAT THE LA PICOTA MUTINEERS WERE PROVIDED WITH FIREARMS BY CORRUPT PRISON GUARDS. CALEO SAID THAT THE RODRIGUEZ GACHA FOLLOWERS RIOTED BECAUSE THEY PROBABLY BELIEVED THAT THE MEDELLIN CARTEL AND THE GROUP LED BY EMERALD TRAFFICER VICTOR CARRANZA ARE OUT TO KILL THEM. ESCOBAR GAVIRIA, HE SAID, IS ANXIOUS TO PREVENT INCrimINATION OF HIMSELF AND OTHER CARTEL MEMBERS BY FOLLOWERS OF RODRIGUEZ CONFIDENTIAL

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CALEO SAID THAT THE TWO PRISON ESCAPES STAGED DECEMBER 26 ARE PART OF JAILBREAKING EFFORTS BY OTHER IMPRISONED FOLLOWERS OF RODRIGUEZ GACHA WHO FEAR THERE IS A PLOT TO KILL THEM IN PRISON. CALEO SPECULATED THAT THE LA PICOTA RIOT WAS THE RESULT OF THE FRUSTRATION OF INMATES AFTER FAILING TO STAGE A JAIL BREAK.

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