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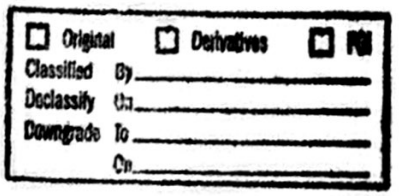

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1032

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BOGOTA 3471

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: SNAR, CO
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING IN COLOMBIA AND RELATED
HIGH LEVEL CORRUPTION

REF: A. STATE 68780 B. BOGOTA 3029 C. BOGOTA 12719
D. BOGOTA 2494 E. BOGOTA 3278

--NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS--NOT RELEASABLE TO CONTRACTORS OR CONTRACTOR/CONSULTANTS--DISSEMINATION AND EXTRACTION OF INFORMATION CONTROLLED BY ORIGINATOR

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(b)(7)(D) (b)(7)(E)

1. SUMMARY: AT HIGHEST LEVEL, THERE IS FIRM EVIDENCE [redacted] ACTIVELY PROTECTS AND PROFITS FROM DRUG TRAFFICKING, AND THERE IS INDICATION [redacted] HAS TRAFFICKER CONNECTIONS. LIST ALSO INCLUDES PRESENT AND PAST [redacted] LIST IS NOT, HOWEVER, DEFINITIVE NEITHER AS REGARDS OFFICIALS IDENTIFIED NOR SCOPE OF THEIR ACTIVITIES; IT IS ONLY A BEGINNING. EVIDENCE IS THAT NARCOTICS-RELATED CORRUPTION IS WIDESPREAD, WITH ESTIMATED CURRENT ANNUAL TRAFFICKING RETURN FOR COLOMBIA OF A LEAST ONE-HALF BILLION DOLLARS PROVIDING STRONG FINANCIAL INCENTIVE. ALTHOUGH DIRECT CAUSE-EFFECT RELATIONSHIP--EXCEPT IN A FEW INDIVIDUAL CASES--IS HARD TO DOCUMENT, OFFICIAL CORRUPTION UNDOUBTEDLY HAS DE-

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TRIMENTAL EFFECT ON US OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMS IN NARCOTICS FIELD. UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, IT IS QUESTIONABLE IF GOC COULD CONTROL THE NARCOTICS SITUATION EVEN IF IT WERE TO ASSIGN A HIGHER PRIORITY TO THE TASK. EMBASSY WILL SUBMIT PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE COURSES OF ACTION TO DEAL WITH THIS DISTURBING SITUATION IN A SEPARATE MESSAGE.

2. AS REQUESTED REF (A), THIS MESSAGE CONVEYS LIST OF KEY OFFICIALS BELIEVED CONNECTED WITH NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING. LIST IS ILLUSTRATIVE OF EXISTING SITUATION, BUT IS IN NO WAY DEFINITIVE, NEITHER AS REGARDS NUMBERS OF OFFICIALS INVOLVED NOR EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT OF THOSE LISTED. IT IS ONLY A BEGINNING. F-2 NARCOTICS INTELLIGENCE UNIT (NIU) (REF C) IS SOURCE OF VERY SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF INFORMATION. NIU, HOWEVER, ONLY OPERATES IN BOGOTA AREA, AND HAS NOT BEEN IN OPERATION LONG ENOUGH FOR ITS FULL POTENTIAL IN IDENTIFYING HIGHER LEVEL TRAFFICKERS OR THEIR PROTECTORS TO BE REALIZED. [redacted] INFORMATION OBTAINED IS ONLY PIECEMEAL AND OFFERS LEADS WHICH IT MAY OR MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO FOLLOW UP.

3. FOLLOWING IS LIST OF KEY OFFICIALS WITH SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THEIR CONNECTION WITH TRAFFICKING:

[redacted]

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(b)(7)(F) (b)(7)(D)

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[redacted]TY FIGURE - PROVIDED CHARACTER REFERENCE IN CONNEC-
[redacted]ITH RELEASE FROM CUSTODY OF MAJOR TRAFFICKER
[redacted]G WELL-PUBLICIZED ARREST.
D. [redacted]ZAR (FNU), NATIONAL POLICE COMMANDING OFFICER
OF [redacted]A DEPARTMENT - DOCUMENTED IN A DEA FILE AS
OWNE[redacted]RIHUANA PLANTATION AND AN ACTIVE TRAFFICKER
IN NARC[redacted]
E. COL. HUM[redacted]RDONA OROZCO - ACCORDING TO RELIABLE
EVIDENCE, CA[redacted]G REMOVED AS CHIEF OF CUSTOMS'
UNIFORMED POLI[redacted]ARDO) FOR NARCOTICS CONNECTIONS,
BUT COULD STILL [redacted]PROMOTION OF CUSTOMS OFFICERS
TO CONTINUE HIS PA[redacted]ND -- AS PROTEGE OF MINISTER
OF DEFENSE--WAS SU[redacted]LY NAMED AS CHIEF OF WAR
MATERIALS OF THE MILIT[redacted]STRY.
F. DR. CICERON PINEDA JIME[redacted]E OF CRIMINAL ARRAIGNMENT
COURT FOR CITY OF BOGOTA[redacted]Y REPORTED TO HAVE
BEEN BRIBED TO SECURE RELE[redacted]PERUVIAN NARCOTICS
TRAFFICKER.
G. COL. LAZO (FNU), FORMER DEPUTY [redacted]DER OF F-2 - INFORMA-
TION FROM DEA INFORMANTS, CORRO[redacted]BY F-2 OFFICERS
INDICATED THAT LAZO WAS GIVING PRO[redacted]O NARCOTICS
TRAFFICKERS. LAZO HAS BEEN TRANSFER[redacted]F-2.
H. CAPT. HAROLD LOZANO JARAMILLO, F-2 CO[redacted]AT CALI -
ACCORDING TO SEVERAL DEA INFORMANTS, L[redacted]NVOLVED
IN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND OPERATES A C[redacted]BORATORY
NEAR CALI.
I. EDGAR ALBERTO SUAREZ, A RANKING OFFICER OF D[redacted]
KIDNAPPING AND EXTORTION DIVISION - RELIABLE INFO[redacted]
INDICATES SUAREZ IS PROTECTING A MAJOR COCAINE NE[redacted]
BY PROVIDING INFORMATION ON DAS ANTI-NARCOTICS ACT[redacted]
(IN ADDITION, CESAR GOMEZ ESTRADA, MINISTER OF JUSTICE A[redacted]
BRIGADIER GENERAL FRANCISCO JOSE NARANJO FRANCO, INSPE[redacted]
GENERAL OF NATIONAL POLICE, WERE IDENTIFIED BY KNOWN TRAF[redacted]
IN MONITORED TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS AS SOURCES OF INFORM[redacted]
ON DRUG SEIZURES. THE RELIABILITY OF TRAFFICKERS' STATEMENTS
IS SUBJECT TO QUESTION.)
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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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O 152217Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1033

S E C R E T FINAL SECTION OF 2 BOGOTA 3471

EXDIS

4. SIMILAR OR IN SOME CASES MORE DETAILED INFORMATION EXISTS ON VARIOUS OTHER MIDDLE AND LOWER-GRADE OFFICIALS, AND THERE ARE STRONG GROUNDS FOR PRESUMPTION OF ACTIVE SUPPORT OF TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES BY OTHER, AS-OF-YET UNIDENTIFIED OFFICIALS. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE OF COLUSION AT A HIGHER LEVEL IN [redacted] INDICATIVE OF THE SITUATION IN THE [redacted] THE FACT THAT SEVERAL MAJOR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS [redacted] (FOR EXAMPLE SEE REF D.) A FURTHER INDICATION OF THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE [redacted]

5. [redacted] AND INDEED IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT WITH THE LOW LEVEL OF OFFICIAL SALARIES AND HIGH INFLATION, AN OFFICIAL MUST HAVE ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INCOME TO MAINTAIN A RESPECTABLE STANDARD OF LIVING. AT BEST HE IS IN A POSITION SUSCEPTIBLE TO CORRUPTION. THE FACT THAT PART OF THE CORRUPTION IS NOW NARCOTICS-FINANCED

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IS NO SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FROM PAST PRACTICE (EXCEPT PERHAPS IN TERMS OF THE POTENTIAL QUANTITY OF MONEY INVOLVED) AND BEARS NO SPECIAL STIGMA HERE.

6. ACCURATE FIGURES ON THE INCOME FOR COLOMBIA FROM TRAFFICKING ARE, OF COURSE, NOT AVAILABLE. BUT ON THE BASIS OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE QUANTITIES OF COCAINE HANDLED BY COLOMBIAN NETWORKS AND THE PRICES THEY ARE RECEIVING, PLUS AN ALLOWANCE FOR TEH STILL MORE DIFFICULT TO CALCULATE RETURN ON

(b)(6) (b)(7)(C)

MARIJUANA, MISSION IS FORCED TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE CURRENT RETURN TO COLOMBIA OR COLOMBIAN CITIZENS IS IN EXCESS OF ONE-HALF BILLION DOLLARS ANNUALLY. THIS WOULD EXCEED THE COMMERCIAL VALUE OF COLOMBIA'S COFFEE EXPORTS TO THE U.S. IN 1976. THE MISSION ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THIS ESTIMATE SUFFERS FROM AN INADEQUATE DATA BASIS AND THAT CERTAIN ARBITRARY JUDGEMENTS SUCH AS AN AVERAGE PRICE PER KILO ARE INVOLVED, AND WILL ATTEMPT TO REFINE THE ESTIMATE AND MAKE IT MORE ACCURATE. IN THE MEANTIME, HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR THAT THERE IS A TREMENDOUS AND READY SOURCE OF ILLEGAL MONEY TO SEDUCE OR SUBVERT THE COLOMBIAN OFFICIAL.

7. [redacted] BUT--EXCEPT IN A FEW INDIVIDUAL CASES--IT IS NOT POSSIBLE AT THIS TIME TO DOCUMENT A DIRECT CAUSE-EFFECT RELATIONSHIP. USAID, FOR EXAMPLE, NOTES THAT ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT SATISFIED WITH THE PACE OR QUALITY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT PROJECT AGREEMENTS, IT FEELS THAT THIS REFLECTS THE GENERAL BUREAUCRATIC INEFFICIENCY WHICH PREVAILS IN THE GOC RATHER THAN WILLFUL EFFORTS TO IMPEDE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION. IT WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, REJECT THE POSSIBILITY OF INDIRECT PROTECTION OF TRAFFICKERS BY OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THOSE CHARGED WITH NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT. MORE DIRECTLY IN THE ENFORCEMENT FIELD, DEA/BDO STATES THAT OFFICIAL CORRUPTION HAS TO BE CONSIDERED THE MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO A MULTILATERAL ENFORCEMENT EFFORT.

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8. ALTHOUGH GAINS HAVE BEEN REGISTERED IN CONNECTION WITH OUR BILATERAL DRUG ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS, THEY HAVE NOT KEPT PACE WITH THE GROWTH IN TRAFFICKING. THE INCREASING WEALTH AND INFLUENCE OF THE TRAFFICKERS AND THE WIDESPREAD PERMEATION OF NARCOTICS-CONNECTED CORRUPTION DO NOT MAKE THE MISSION SANGUINE ABOUT THE FUTURE. [redacted] IS UNDOUBTEDLY [redacted] THE SITUATION--ONE EVIDENCE IS [redacted] ON THE DRUG PROBLEM RECENTLY (REF E)-- BUT BECAUSE OF POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS AND THE INTRACTABILITY OF THE SITUATION FEELS UNABLE TO ACT MORE FORCEFULLY AND EFFECTIVELY IN FIELD.

9. WITH RESPECT TO U.S. COURSES OF ACTION IN THE FACE OF THIS SITUATION, WE HAVE ALREADY EXPRESSED IN OUR RECENT PARM SUBMISSION (REF B) OUR BELIEF THAT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ASSISTANCE UNDER EXISTING PROGRAMS WILL HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY MONITORED AND THAT WE WILL NEED TO MAKE CLEAR TO THE GOC THAT PROVISION OF FUTURE ASSISTANCE WILL BE DEPENDENT UPON THE DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT PROGRAMS. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE HAVE NEARLY COMPLETED THE END-USE SURVEY CALLED FOR IN STATE

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5144 AND WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF ELABORATING THE MONITORING PRECEDURES (FOR COMMODITIES) REQUESTED IN STATE 79445. THESE OF COURSE ARE NO MORE THAN BASIC STEPS, APPROPRIATE FOR NARCOTICS PROGRAMS EVERYWHERE. WE WILL SHORTLY TRANSMIT A SUPPLEMENTARY MESSAGE OUTLINING SUGGESTED COURSES OF FURTHER ACTION FOR DEALING WITH THE LOCAL SITUATION DESCRIBED IN THE FOREGOING PARAGRAPHS.

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