CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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REPORT CLASS SECRET

DIST: 12 MARCH 2001

COUNTRY: COLOMBIA

SUBJ: RELOCATION OF UNITED SELF-DEFENSE GROUPS OF COLOMBIA SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL BOLIVAR BLOC IN RESPONSE TO COLOMBIAN ARMY OPERATIONS IN SOUTHERN BOLIVAR;

DOI: MID-FEBRUARY 2001

SOURCE: NONE

SUMMARY: NONE
1. As of mid-February 2001, United Self-Defense Groups of Colombia (AUC) Southern and Central Bolivar Bloc units were temporarily forced to relocate east towards Cesar and North Santander departments as a result of Colombian military operations conducted in Southern Bolivar. These operations were likely a part of the Colombian Army's "Operation Bolivar" which was seeking to neutralize illegal armed groups' ability to wage war in the region. Approximately 700-800 of the men led by the AUC bloc commander, had to be moved into La Gloria, Aguas Chica, San Martin, and San Alberto in Cesar Department. A smaller contingent fled into La Esperanza in North Santander. Gave the order to disperse when units belonging to the Colombian Army's 5th Brigade conducted pre-dawn raids in the areas near San Blas and Simiti, Southern Bolivar. The army units conducted searches of private property and were able to capture approximately 70 of men and an unknown quantity of unspecified communications equipment.

2. While the Colombian Army units were successful in pushing them out of the aforementioned areas, the army treated them "well." No additional details are known about the reported release of captured paramilitary members.

3. Comments, evaluations, and requirements welcome.
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