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P 171920Z DEC 99
 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2400
 INFO NSC WASHDC
 DIRONDCP WASHDC
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~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ SECTION 01 OF 05 BOGOTA 011253

USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD BRAYSHAW
 USCINSCOC ALSO FOR POLAD LITT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1.6(X1,X5,X6)
 TAGS: PTER, SNAR, MASS, ECON, PHUM, ASEC, PINS, EAID, CO
 SUBJECT: COLOMBIA'S PUTUMAYO: A COCA ECONOMY IN DISPUTE
 (PART I OF A PUTUMAYO TRIP REPORT)

REF: A)BOGOTA 6624

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE BARBARA C. MOORE. REASONS:

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: DAVID W COX
 DATE/CASE ID: 05 MAY 2009 200703141

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: APPEALS REVIEW PANEL
 APPEAL ACTION: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELEASED
 REASON(S): 1.4(D), 1.4(B)
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1.5 (B&D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: THE ENTIRE CULTURE OF COLOMBIA'S SOUTHERN PUTUMAYO DEPARTMENT - ITS ECONOMY, ITS SECURITY, ITS FUTURE - IS INTIMATELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE FATE OF ITS CHIEF SOURCE OF INCOME, COCA. PAST GOVERNMENTAL EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM HAVE FAILED MISERABLY AND ONLY DELAYED PAYING THE PIPER. WITH NARCO, GUERRILLA AND PARAMILITARY VIOLENCE BEYOND THE ABILITIES OF THE (HEAVILY BUNKERED) LOCAL FORCES OF ORDER, NEEDED ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS WILL INEVITABLY BE HINDERED BY THE LACK OF SECURITY. THIS WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOCIAL PROTESTS, AND PERHAPS VIOLENCE, THAT LIKELY WILL FOLLOW IN THE WAKE OF PLANNED AERIAL ERADICATION EFFORTS IN THE DEPARTMENT IN THE COMING MONTHS. (THIS IS PART ONE OF A TWO-PART TRIP REPORT FOLLOWING POLOFFS' CONFIDENTIAL

14(D)

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 DECEMBER 1-3 TRIP TO PUTUMAYO DEPARTMENT.) END SUMMARY.

2. (C) THE LUSH JUNGLE DEPARTMENT OF PUTUMAYO, ACROSS THE BORDER FROM ECUADOR'S NORTH-EASTERN JUNGLE REGION, IS BELIEVED TO BE HOME TO THE LION'S SHARE OF COLOMBIA'S EXPLOSIVE GROWTH IN COCA CULTIVATION. AS SUCH, THE DEPARTMENT HAS ATTRACTED MORE THAN ITS FAIR SHARE OF ATTENTION FROM BOTH THE FARC GUERRILLAS AND AUC PARAMILITARIES. THE GOC WILL INTENSIFY ITS COUNTER-COCA EFFORT THERE WITH THE DECEMBER INAUGURATION OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMY'S FIRST COUNTER-NARCOTICS BATTALION (AT TRES ESQUINAS, ALONG THE CAQUETA-PUTUMAYO BORDER) AND USG-SUPPORTED AERIAL SPRAY ERADICATION EFFORTS EXPECTED TO GET UNDERWAY IN EARLY 2000. DURING THEIR DECEMBER 1-3 VISIT, POLOFFS HOPSCOTCHED BY AIR AMONG PUERTO ASIS (THE DEPARTMENT'S LARGEST TOWN), SANTA ANA (HOME TO THE ARMY'S 24TH BRIGADE) AND VILLA GARZON (HOME TO AN ARMY BATTALION AND THE ANTI-NARCOTICS POLICE BASE DESTINED TO SERVE AS THE NAS-FINANCED FORWARD OPERATING LOCATION FOR AERIAL ERADICATION). THEY DISCUSSED THE LOCAL NARCOTICS TRADE AND PUBLIC ORDER ISSUES WITH COLOMBIAN ARMY, POLICE (CNP) AND CIVILIAN OFFICIALS.

14(D)

14(D)

"PUTUMAYO IS COCA"

3. (C) TO A ONE, INTERLOCUTORS VOLUNTEERED THAT PUTUMAYO'S ECONOMY IS COCA-DRIVEN. PUTUMAYO'S HEALTH IS

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DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE HEALTH OF THE COCA TRADE, THEY SAID. WHILE COCAINE HCL LABS CAN BE FOUND ACROSS THE DEPARTMENT, MOST OF THE DEPARTMENT'S COCA PRODUCTION AND COCAINE LABS ARE CENTERED IN THE MOST POPULATED CORNER OF THE DEPARTMENT: WEST OF THE MAIN NORTH-SOUTH ROAD WHICH ENDS AT PUERTO ASIS AND SOUTH OF ORITO (IN THESE TWO MUNICIPALITIES PLUS LA HORMIGA (AKA, VALLE DEL GUAMUEZ) AND SAN MIGUEL MUNICIPALITIES). INDEED, THE GOVERNOR DECLARED PUBLICLY IN OCTOBER THAT AN ESTIMATED 135,000 OF PUTUMAYO'S 350,000 RESIDENTS WORK DIRECTLY IN THE COCA TRADE, MOSTLY IN COCA CULTIVATION. THE REST OF THE DEPARTMENT'S POPULATION LIVES OFF THE TRADE INDIRECTLY.

OF THE ARMY'S 24TH BRIGADE FORWARD DEPLOYED TO SANTA ANA, ECHOED CIVILIAN OFFICIALS IN ESTIMATING THAT SEVENTY PERCENT OF ALL MONEY FLOWING THROUGH PUTUMAYO COMES DIRECTLY FROM NARCOTICS.

1.4(B)

1.4(D)

4. (C) POLOFFS WERE TOLD THAT THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO UNEMPLOYMENT IN URBAN PUERTO ASIS. A BUSTLING TOWN CENTER OF 25,000 "URBANITES" (PLUS ANOTHER 25,000 RURAL) MAKES PUERTO ASIS THE DEPARTMENT'S LARGEST POPULATION AND TRADING CENTER. "IT'S TRUE; WE HAVE NO BEGGARS," NOTED

1.4(B)

OF THE DIRAN ANTI-NARCOTICS POLICE DETACHMENT. "EVERYBODY HERE DOES SOMETHING." NOR DOES PUTUMAYO SUFFER FROM THE SAME PROBLEM OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS MANY OTHER DEPARTMENTS ARE EXPERIENCING; INSTEAD, PUTUMAYO'S POPULATION IS INCREASING. MANY OF ITS NEW RESIDENTS HAVE BEEN ATTRACTED BY PROMISES OF "EASY MONEY" IN THE COCA BOOM. MANY WORK

1.4(D)

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	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00	IO-00	ITC-01	JUSE-00	LAB-01

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P 171920Z DEC 99
 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2401
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 AMEMBASSY PANAMA
 AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
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USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD BRAYSHAW
 USCINSCOC ALSO FOR POLAD LITT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1.6 (X1, X5, X6)
 TAGS: PTER, SNAR, MASS, ECON, PHUM, ASEC, PINS, EAID, CO
 SUBJECT: COLOMBIA'S PUTUMAYO: A COCA ECONOMY IN DISPUTE
 (PART I OF A PUTUMAYO TRIP REPORT)

ON ONE OF THE MANY LARGE PLANTATION STYLE COCA FARMS IN
 PUTUMAYO WHICH SEEM TO BE THE NORM RATHER THAN SMALL
 PLOTS PLANTED BY INDIVIDUAL FARMERS. THIS MAY HELP
 EXPLAIN WHY NAS' AERIAL ERADICATION PILOTS REPORT ALMOST
 NO COCA ON THE ECUADORIAN SIDE OF THE BORDER - MANY MAY
 HAVE MIGRATED NORTH TO WORK THE PLANTATIONS.

5. (c) THERE HAS BEEN COCA IN PUTUMAYO FOR AT LEAST A
 GENERATION. BUT MUCH OF PUTUMAYO'S EXPLOSION OF COCA
 CULTIVATION IS OF RECENT ORIGIN, COMING IN THE WAKE OF
 THE 1996 CAQUETA CAMPESINO "COCA PROTESTS." AFTER THOSE
 MARCHES TURNED VIOLENT, THE SAMPER GOVERNMENT REACHED AN
 AGREEMENT (THE ORITO ACCORDS) WITH THE COCALEROS OF

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PUTUMAYO. THEN-INTERIOR MINISTER HORACIO SERPA PROMISED THE DEPARTMENT INFUSIONS OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE, HEALTH AND EDUCATION ASSISTANCE, ETC. THE GOVERNMENT INFORMALLY AGREED TO A THREE-YEAR BAN ON ERADICATION, WITH THE BAN
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 TO END IN LATE 1999, WELL AFTER THE END OF THE SAMPER ADMINISTRATION. (SOME INTERLOCUTORS CLAIMED SERPA EVEN "LEGALIZED" A MAXIMUM OF THREE HECTARES OF COCA PER GROWER.) THE THREE-YEAR BAN WAS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE THE LOCALS TIME TO TRANSITION OUT OF COCA, BEFORE THE HAMMER OF THE STATE CAME DOWN.

6. (C) BUT IT HASN'T WORKED THAT WAY. INSTEAD, THE STATE INVESTED LITTLE IN ALTERNATIVES FOR PUTUMAYO - AND PUTUMAYO USED THE THREE YEARS TO PLANT COCA. LIMITED AERIAL FUMIGATION BEGAN ONLY IN NOVEMBER 1999 IN NORTHERN PUTUMAYO, WITH NAS-CONTRACTED SPRAY PLANES SPRAYING AS FAR AS TEN MILES SOUTH OF THE CAQUETA RIVER SEPARATING CAQUETA AND PUTUMAYO. WITH THIS MONTH'S GRADUATION FROM TRAINING OF THE ARMY'S FIRST COUNTER-NARCOTICS BATTALION, MORE EXTENSIVE SPRAYING IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN IN EARLY 2000 -- ALTHOUGH THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IS STILL QUITE CONCERNED ABOUT THE LIKELIHOOD OF SOCIAL PROTEST AND AN UPSWING IN VIOLENCE IF PUTUMAYO SPRAYING BEGINS IN EARNEST.

PUERTO ASIS: A SNAP-SHOT OF LIFE ON THE FRONT LINES

7. (C) PERHAPS THE BEST WAY TO UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT IN WHICH PUTUMAYO'S COCA ECONOMY THRIVES, IS TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE TOWN IN WHICH THE COLOMBIAN STATE ENJOYS GREATER "PENETRATION" THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE DEPARTMENT. FOR ITS TOTAL (URBAN AND RURAL) MUNICIPAL POPULATION OF SOME 50,000 RESIDENTS, PUERTO ASIS HAS TWO BANK BRANCHES (BANCO GANADERO AND THE STATE-OWNED BANCO AGRARIO), A DOZEN-PLUS MONEY WIRING SERVICES, TWO HIGH SCHOOLS, ONE
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 PROSECUTING ATTORNEY, ONE JUDGE AND ONE JAIL (WITH 45 PRISONERS). RANDOM WATER AND ELECTRICITY RATIONING IS A DAILY OCCURRENCE. ONE INTERLOCUTOR ESTIMATED THAT ONLY 500 OF THE 50,000 RESIDENTS HAVE EVER GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL. THAT FIGURE STRIKES US AS LOW, BUT NOT BY MUCH.

8. (C) BOTH THE DAS (FBI-EQUIVALENT) AND THE SIJIN

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INVESTIGATIVE POLICE HAVE ABANDONED PUERTO ASIS IN THE PAST TWO YEARS DUE TO SECURITY CONCERNS. THE TOWN'S MAYOR, NESTOR HERNANDEZ IGLESIA, WAS PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN OCTOBER FOR FRAUDULENT CONTRACTS AND KICKBACKS.

~~1.4(B), 1.4(D)~~



1.4(B), 1.4(D)

PUERTO ASIS HAD 330 HOMICIDES IN 1998, AND 162 DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 1999. THIS IS EQUIVALENT TO A RATE ABOUT 12 TIMES THE ALREADY HIGH NATIONAL AVERAGE. PARAMILITARIES KILLED THREE PERSONS THE NIGHT BEFORE POLOFFS' ARRIVAL IN TOWN.

9. (c) SINCE NOVEMBER OF 1998, 18 OF THE TOWN'S 80 POLICE HAVE BEEN KILLED. THE DIRAN COPS ABANDONED THEIR UNSECURE BASE ON THE EDGE OF TOWN IN FAVOR OF A DOWNTOWN LOCATION AFTER EIGHT OF THEIR BRETHREN WERE KILLED IN A FARC BOMBING. EVEN MORE POLICE HAVE BEEN ASSASSINATED SINCE THEN, HOWEVER, BY THE SECURITY FORCES' BIGGEST NIGHTMARE -- THE URBAN MILITIA MEMBERS OF THE FARC. TWO DIRAN POLICEMEN WERE SEPARATELY SHOT TO DEATH WITHIN EYESIGHT

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USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD BRAYSHAW
 USCINSCOC ALSO FOR POLAD LITT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1.6(X1,X5,X6)
 TAGS: PTER, SNAR, MASS, ECON, PHUM, ASEC, PINS, EAID, CO
 SUBJECT: COLOMBIA'S PUTUMAYO: A COCA ECONOMY IN DISPUTE
 (PART I OF A PUTUMAYO TRIP REPORT)

OF THE NEW POLICE STATION IN BROAD DAYLIGHT. A DEPARTMENTAL POLICEMAN WAS KILLED JUST AS A LOCAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISGORGED ITS HUNDREDS OF STUDENTS. (A FARC MEMBER IN CIVILIAN ATTIRE APPROACHED THE POLICE OFFICER OVERSEEING SCHOOL RELEASE AND DEMANDED HIS RIFLE. WHEN THE POLICEMAN REFUSED, THE MILITIAMAN PULLED A PISTOL, SHOT HIM POINT-BLANK AND GRABBED THE RIFLE. OTHER POLICE OBSERVING FROM ACROSS THE PLAZA HELD THEIR FIRE FOR FEAR OF MASSACRING THE SCHOOL CHILDREN, WHILE THE FARC ASSASSIN MADE OFF THROUGH THE CROWD OF HORRIFIED KIDS.)

10. ~~(c)~~ THE SECURITY OF PUERTO ASIS IS "GUARANTEED" BY 35
 DIRAN ANTI-NARCOTICS POLICE (ONLY TWO OF WHOM ARE OFFICERS), PLUS 45 REGULAR CNP. AS OF THIS SUMMER, THE TOWN IS ALSO HOME TO A COMPANY (100 MEN) OF THE ARMY'S 24TH BRIGADE. THE TOWN HAS SUFFERED FOUR URBAN FARC ATTACKS IN 1999, ALTHOUGH THE FARC HAS THUS FAR REFRAINED FROM AN OUTRIGHT "TAKEOVER" OF THE TOWN - SOMETHING THE

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TOWN'S DEFENDERS CONCEDE THE FARC COULD DO WHENEVER THEY DECIDE IT IS IN THEIR INTEREST. WHEN THE JUNGLE WARFARE-TRAINED DIRAN POLICE LEAVE THEIR SANDBAGGED HEADQUARTERS TO CONDUCT COUNTER-NARCOTICS OPERATIONS, THEY MUST WALK; THEY HAVE JUST ONE TWIN-CAB PICK-UP TRUCK TO CALL THEIR OWN. AS A RESULT, THEY CONDUCT NO OPERATIONS MORE THAN 7-10 MILES FROM TOWN.

11. (c) THE ARMY COMPANY PATROLS TOWN ONLY AS FAR AS THE RIVER BANKS (3 KM FROM DOWNTOWN). WHILE THE ARMY AND POLICE SOMETIMES MOUNT RANDOM DAYTIME ROADBLOCKS ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN, NEITHER WILL MOUNT SUCH ROADBLOCKS AT NIGHT. NEITHER THE COPS NOR THE ARMY VENTURE ACROSS THE RIVER, WHERE AN ESTIMATED 500 FARC MILITIA CONTROL THE TIN-ROOFED SHACKS AND SLUMS THAT DOT THE FAR SIDE AND ARE HOME TO THE BULK OF THE "URBAN" POPULATION. THE POLICE MATTER-OF-FACTLY CONCEDE THAT THE FARC CONTROLS THE RIVER. HAVING BOUGHT SEVERAL DOZEN OUTBOARD MOTORBOATS FOR LOCAL WATER TAXI SERVICES, THE FARC CAN "RECLAIM" THE BOATS AT WILL FOR USE IN CONDUCTING ITS OWN MILITARY OR TRAFFICKING OPERATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE NAVY IS BASED IN THE FAR WEST OF THE DEPARTMENT (PUERTO LEGUIZAMO) AND HAS VISITED PUERTO ASIS -- THE LARGEST PORT ON THE PUTUMAYO RIVER - JUST ONCE THIS YEAR.

1.4(B), 1.4(D)

1.4(D)

12. (c) ROAD TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF TOWN IS DANGEROUS. THE GUERRILLAS REGULARLY MOUNT ROADBLOCKS, EVEN IN THE DAYTIME, BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH OF THE TOWN. AS A RESULT,
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 THE SECURITY FORCES AVOID INTER-TOWN TRAVEL BY ROAD.

NEITHER THE POLICE NOR THE ARMY HAVE ANY DEDICATED AIR ASSETS IN THE DEPARTMENT (MUCH LESS IN TOWN), ALTHOUGH THE ECOPETROL STATE OIL COMPANY PROVIDES THE ARMY AT SANTA ANA (A 10-MINUTE FLIGHT FROM PUERTO ASIS) 20 HOURS OF MI-17 HELICOPTER USE PER MONTH. THE NEAREST DEDICATED AIR SUPPORT IS ONE FLIGHT HOUR AWAY AT TRES ESQUINAS, CAQUETA.

1.4(B), 1.4(D)

THE PARAMILITARIES HAVE ARRIVED

13. (c) MEANWHILE, THE AUC PARAMILITARIES HAVE COME TO PUTUMAYO. SEVERAL LOCALS, [REDACTED] TOLD POLOFFS THAT THE AUC PARAMILITARIES NOW CONTROL THE URBAN AREAS OF BOTH PUERTO ASIS AND LA

1.4(D)

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HORMIGA, CONDUCTING DAYTIME ROVING PATROLS IN KNOWN VEHICLES.

STATED THAT THE FARC'S REPRESSION HAS PROMPTED AUTHENTIC POPULAR REJECTION OF THE FARC AND CLEAR SUPPORT FOR THE PARAMILITARIES.

1.4(D)

1.4(B), 1.4(D)

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COMPLAINED TO POLOFFS THAT, IN SUCH AN

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2403
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USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD BRAYSHAW
USCINSCOC ALSO FOR POLAD LITT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1.6 (X1, X5, X6)
TAGS: PTER, SNAR, MASS, ECON, PHUM, ASEC, PINS, EAID, CO
SUBJECT: COLOMBIA'S PUTUMAYO: A COCA ECONOMY IN DISPUTE
(PART I OF A PUTUMAYO TRIP REPORT)

ENVIRONMENT, THE CIVILIAN POPULACE DO NOT REPORT TO THE
SECURITY FORCES ON THE PARAS' ACTIVITIES.

1.4(B), 1.4(D)

14. (C) VIRTUALLY ALL INTERLOCUTORS DATED THE PARAS' ARRIVAL IN THE DEPARTMENT TO EARLY 1998. IN PHASE ONE, THE PARAS' BEGAN A GRAFFITI CAMPAIGN ANNOUNCING THEIR ARRIVAL AND SPONSORED A NUMBER OF HORRIFIC MASSACRES OF UNARMED INDIVIDUALS, ALLEGEDLY CAMPESINO COCA-GROWERS, NARCOS OR FARC SUPPORTERS. ALL INTERLOCUTORS NOTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT PUERTO ASIS HAS BEEN "RELATIVELY QUIET" AFTER VIOLENCE SPIKED IN MAY-JUNE THIS YEAR. IN THIS SECOND PHASE, THE PARAS LET UP ON THE VIOLENCE, INCREASED URBAN CONFIDENCE, AND BEGAN QUIETLY SCHMOOZING THE DEPARTMENT'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL LEADERS AND ASKING FOR MONEY AND SUPPORT. IN THIS MANNER, SAID ONE CONTACT, THE PARAS BUILT UP A LOCAL WAR CHEST WHILE ALSO BUILDING POLITICAL LEGITIMACY. THE PARAS ALSO ENTERED A BIDDING WAR AGAINST THE FARC; THEY OFFERED THEIR SERVICES TO THE NARCOS, UNDERCUTTING THE FARC ON PRICE WHILE PROMISING

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INCREASED PUBLIC SECURITY.

[REDACTED]

THAT THE LOCAL AUC LEADERSHIP IS CURRENTLY

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COMPOSED OF INDIVIDUALS IMPORTED FROM ANTIOQUIA AND ELSEWHERE IN NORTHERN COLOMBIA. THE RANK AND FILE, HE SAID, ARE COMPOSED BY MORE AND MORE LOCALS, AS THE AUC HAS TAPPED INTO LEGITIMATE ANTI-FARC RESENTMENTS. HE STATED THAT THE AUC'S LOCAL CHAPTER IS NOW ON ITS FOURTH COMMANDER IN LESS THAN TWO YEARS, WITH AT LEAST ONE OF THE PREVIOUS COMMANDERS HAVING BEEN EXECUTED BY HIS AUC SUPERIORS FOR KILLING THE WRONG PEOPLE - PEOPLE ASSOCIATED WITH THE AUC'S NARCO-BACKERS. (THE FARC ALSO REPORTEDLY EXECUTED ONE OF THEIR OWN DEPUTY FRONT COMMANDERS EARLIER THIS YEAR FOR SIMILAR OFFENSES.) OTHER INTERLOCUTORS CONFIRMED THIS, ADDING THAT THE AUC'S COMMAND AND CONTROL HAS IMPROVED GREATLY IN RECENT MONTHS.

16. (c) [REDACTED] AND OTHER CIVILIANS ALL ECHOED THE SAME THEME: THAT THE MILITARY AND POLICE WERE "COMPLACENT" ABOUT THE AUC'S PRESENCE IN THE REGION. MANY RECOGNIZED THAT THIS WAS "UNDERSTANDABLE" GIVEN THE FARC'S OVERWHELMING PRESSURE ON THE SECURITY FORCES. BUT THEY NONETHELESS WORRIED THAT THIS "TURNING A BLIND EYE" WOULD ONLY CORRUPT THE PUBLIC FORCES, GIVEN THE AUC'S OWN
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NARCO-FINANCING. OTHERS VOLUNTEERED THAT THE CIVILIANS DO NOT REPORT PARAMILITARY ACTIVITIES TO THE SECURITY FORCES BECAUSE "NO ONE SEES THE POLICE AND ARMY AS IMPARTIAL."

17. (C) SOME CIVILIANS SAID THE "COMPLACENCY" OF THE SECURITY FORCES OFTEN CROSSES INTO ACTIVE COMPLICITY WITH PARAMILITARIES.

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18. (C) IN A DECEMBER 1 SPEECH IN PUERTO ASIS FOR THE LOCAL POLICE CHANGE IN COMMANDERS, PUTUMAYO GOVERNOR JORGE DEVIA MURCIA CALLED ON THE NATIONAL POLICE TO BE AWARE OF THE SOCIETY'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO COUNTER-NARCOTICS OPERATIONS ON THE DEPARTMENT'S NARCO-CULTURE.

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ACTION SCT-00

INFO	LOG-00	MFA-01	NP-00	AID-00	A-00	ACQ-00	CA-02
	CCO-00	CG-00	COME-00	CTME-00	INL-01	DINT-00	DODE-00
	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	WHA-01	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EXIM-01
	OIGO-02	E-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	FBO-01	FRB-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00	IO-00	ITC-01	JUSE-00	LAB-01
	L-00	ADS-00	MMP-00	M-00	AC-01	NRCE-00	NSAE-00
	OCS-03	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00
	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-01	DTC-01	SGHD-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00
	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/025W	

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2404
INFO NSC WASHDC
DIRONDCP WASHDC
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY LIMA
USINT HAVANA
USCINCSO MIAMI FL
DEA WASHDC
CIA WASHDC

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DIA WASHDC

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USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD BRAYSHAW
USCINSCOC ALSO FOR POLAD LITT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1.6 (X1, X5, X6)
TAGS: PTER, SNAR, MASS, ECON, PHUM, ASEC, PINS, EAID, CO
SUBJECT: COLOMBIA'S PUTUMAYO: A COCA ECONOMY IN DISPUTE
(PART I OF A PUTUMAYO TRIP REPORT)

(SEE REFTEL FOR MORE ON THE GOVERNOR'S VIEWS.) THE PUTUMAYO FEDERATION OF COMMUNITIES IS PUBLICLY CALLING FOR "NO TO AERIAL ERADICATION, YES TO A PEACEFUL, POLITICAL SOLUTION." ALL INTERLOCUTORS, INCLUDING THE POLICE AND ARMY COMMANDERS SPOKEN TO, APPEALED FOR A ROBUST PROGRAM OF ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT, EVEN AS THEY RECOGNIZED THAT SUCH PROMISES HAVE BEEN MADE - AND ABDICATED - BEFORE.

19. (c) [REDACTED] OUTLINED HIS HOPES FOR "SELF-ERADICATION, SELF-SUBSTITUTION AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION" (PRINCIPALLY, YUCCA, RICE, EXOTIC FRUITS, PALM OIL, SUGAR, CORN). WITHOUT ROADS TO GET ALTERNATIVE PRODUCTS TO MARKET, HOWEVER, HE WARNED THAT NO ONE WOULD WILLINGLY PLANT BANANAS FOR 12,000 PESOS A KILO WHEN COCA BASE FETCHES 1.8 MILLION PESOS A KILO. [REDACTED] CLAIMED THAT TARGETED FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN PUTUMAYO OF 6 MILLIONS DOLLARS FOR EACH OF THREE YEARS - WITH PROPER IMPLEMENTATION AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CONTROLS -- WOULD "WIPE OUT" PUTUMAYO'S COCA IN THREE YEARS. "BUT

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WITHOUT ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT," HE WARNED, "REPRESSION WILL ONLY HELP FARC SOLIDIFY ITS SOCIAL SUPPORT BASE. WE (THE ARMED FORCES)," HE CONCLUDED, "ARE PART OF THE SOLUTION, BUT WE ARE NOT 'THE' SOLUTION".

1.4(D)

20. (c) THE ISSUE OF THE FARC'S INVOLVEMENT IN PUTUMAYO NARCOTICS IS THE FOCUS OF COMPANION SEPTEL, "COLOMBIA'S PUTUMAYO: THE FARC-NARC CONNECTION."

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