UNCLASSIFIED

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.5(D)

PAGE 01
ACTION ARA-01
INFO
LOG-00 ACDA-08 ACDE-00 INLB-01 AID-00 ACQ-01 INL-01
OASY-00 SRPP-00 DS-00 EB-00 OIGO-01 TEDE-00 INR-00
L-01 ADS-00 MMP-00 PM-00 SCT-00 ASDS-01 PMB-00
DSCC-00 DRL-04 SWCI-00 /019W
-------------------ED47D3 082100Z /38

O 081923Z OCT 97
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9193
INFO SECDEF WASHDC//OCDEPS//
USIA WASHDC 3236
DEA WASHDC
DINRSA FT GEORGE G MEADE MD
FBI WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
CIA WASHDC
DINRDCP WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
USCINCSO MIAMI FL
DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC
NDIC JOHNSTOWN PA
DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
NSC WASHDC

L BOGOTA 009567
STATE FOR ARA/AND, INL, L/LEI, PM, AND DRL
NSC FOR JAMES DOBBINS

PAGE 02
ONDCP FOR JANET CRIST
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
DEA FOR OF, OFU, OC, AX
JUSTICE FOR CRIM. WARREN, RICHARD AND NDDS/VAN VLIET
FBI FOR CID/IRS/IRU2
USIA FOR AR, I/GAR
TREASURY FOR FINCEN

E.O. 12958: 10/07/02

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN L. MILLS
DATE/CASE ID: 22 MAY 2001 200004409
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 07-OCT-2007, REASON: 1.5(D)

UNCLASSIFIED
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TAGS: PGOV, MCAP, PHUM, PTER, SNAR, PINR, KJUS, CO
SUBJECT: SCANDAL OVER ARMY REQUEST TO CONVIVIR IN ANTIOQUIA

(U) CLASSIFIED BY POLMILOFF RICHARD HAWKINS. REASON: 1.5(D).

1. (U) SUMMARY: REVELATION OF A CIRCULAR SENT BY THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY'S FOURTH BRIGADE TO VARIOUS CONVIVIR (SELF-DEFENSE ASSOCIATIONS) IN ANTIOQUIA CAUSED OUTRAGE IN THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT ON OCTOBER 7. THE CIRCULAR ASKED THE ASSOCIATIONS TO REPORT ON THE POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS AND SYMPATHIES OF MAYORAL AND TOWN COUNCIL CANDIDATES IN THEIR AREAS. ANTIOQUIA SENATOR PIÉDAD CORDOBA, A FIERCE OPPONENT OF THE CONVIVIR MOVEMENT, SAID THE CIRCULAR WAS PROOF THAT THE GROUPS ARE INVOLVED IN (POLITICAL) INTELLIGENCE AND UNDERMINING THE RULE OF LAW. DEFENSE MINISTER ECHEVERRI SAID IT WAS AN HONEST MISTAKE, ANTIOQUIA GOVERNOR URIBE CALLED IT AN INAPPROPRIATE ERROR, AND ARMY COMMANDER MG GALAN ORDERED AN INVESTIGATION. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) ON OCTOBER 7 CONSERVATIVE SENATOR FABIO VALENCIA CASSIO ANNOUNCED TO GENERAL CONSTERNATION THAT A MEMO SIGNED BY FOURTH BRIGADE CHIEF OF STAFF COL. JUAN OCTAVIO TRIVINO HAD ASKED CONVIVIR SELF-DEFENSE ASSOCIATIONS IN ANTIOQUIA TO SEND THE ARMY LISTS OF LOCAL CANDIDATES, INCLUDING THEIR POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS, DEGREE OF ACCEPTANCE AMONG THE PEOPLE, THEIR SYMPATHIES TOWARD DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY FORCES, AND WHAT DEGREE OF LOCAL INFLUENCE THEY WIELD. THE MEMORANDUM INDICATED THAT "NARCOTERRORISTS" OF THE FARC (REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA) AND ELN (NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY) ARE CARRYING OUT A CAMPAIGN OF INTIMIDATION MY MEANS OF KIDNAPPINGS, ASSASSINATIONS, TERRORIST ATTACKS AND ARMED ACTIONS TO IMPEDIE THE OCTOBER 26 ELECTORAL PROCESS. "FOR THAT REASON," SAID THE Memo, "IT IS REQUIRED THAT THE CONVIVIR ASSOCIATIONS GIVE MAXIMUM EFFORT TO FINDING INFORMATION IN ORDER TO NEUTRALIZE AND/OR IMPEDIE THE EFFORTS OF THE SUBVERSIVE CARTELS." THE CIRCULAR ALSO ASKED THE CONVIVIRS FOR INFORMATION ON THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL GUERRILLA GROUPS TO DAMAGE ELECTIONS, ANALYSIS OF THE MOST VULNERABLE POINTS IN PUBLIC FORCES PROTECTION OF THE ELECTIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS TO GUARANTEE A NORMAL ELECTION PROCESS.

3. (U) SEN. VALENCIA MADE HIS REVELATION DURING A MEETING OF THE SENATE COMMISSION ON CONCILIATION AND PEACE, CONVENED TO FIND WAYS OF SUPPORTING THE GOVERNMENT PEACE INITIATIVE AND DETERRING ELECTORAL VIOLENCE. INTERIOR MINISTER CARLOS TRUJILLO SAID HE HAD
IMMEDIATELY NOTIFIED DEFENSE MINISTER GILBERTO MEJIA, WHO LATER CHARACTERIZED THE MEMO AS A GOOD-FAITH ERROR IN COL. TRIVINO’S EAGERNESS TO COLLABORATE WITH THE AUTHORITIES. GOV. URIBE, A STRONG DEFENDER OF CONVIVIRS, SAID COLOMBIA’S IS A BROAD DEMOCRACY WHICH MUST ADMIT ALL FORMS OF EXPRESSION OF OPPOSITION.