CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01
ACTION MCT-04

INFO
LOG-00 ADS-00 AID-00 INR-05 SS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSC-00 ARA-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 SY-05 L-02 AMAD-01
TRSE-00 PM-05 PA-02 INRE-00 CA-02 A-02 USSS-00
SYE-00 FBI-00 FBIAM-01 SLFD-01 /030 W

O 072350Z NOV 85 22FF4
FM AMEMBRASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3525
INFO USCINCUSO QUARRY HEIGHTS FN IMMEDIATE
DEA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
CONTADORA COLLECTIVE
USIA WASHDC 6577

CONFIDENTIAL BOGOTA 13811

TERREP

E.O. 12356; DECL:OADR
TAGS: PTER, CO
SUBJECT: SITREP, AS OF 1700 HOURS LOCAL TIME,
- TERRORIST ATTACK ON THE PALACE OF JUSTICE

REFS: A. BOGOTA 13778
- B. DEFIRRO/PETERS TELCON

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT

2. WITH THE END OF FIGHTING AT THE PALACE OF JUSTICE
   (REF A), THE IMMEDIATE CRISIS IN BOGOTA APPEARS TO
   BE OVER. FALLOUT ON THE UPCOMING LEGISLATIVE AND
   PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, THE PRESTIGE OF PRESIDENT
   BETANCUR, AND THE FUTURE OF THE GOC PEACE PROCESS WITH
   THE GUERRILLAS ARE LIKELY TO BE EXTENSIVE, AND WILL
   BE REPORTED SEPARATELY. MEANWHILE, WE ANTICIPATE
   THAT (BARRING A RESUMPTION OF MAJOR FIGHTING SOMEWHERE
   CONFIDENTIAL
   
   CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02
BOGOTA 13811 0723542

IN THE CITY), THIS WILL BE OUR LAST NIACT SITREP.

3. SUCH A RESUMPTION OF FIGHTING CANNOT BE RULLED OUT. A RUNNING-GUN BATTLE, SIZE:  UNCLASSIFIED
UNCLASSIFIED

UNSPECIFIED: IS GOING ON IN SOUTHERN BOGOTA BETWEEN M-19 GUERRILLAS AND POLICE. ANOTHER, VERY DISTURBING REPORT TO THE EMBASSY FROM GOC POLICE STATES THAT A WHITE SUZUKI WAS STOLEN THIS AFTERNOON. THE OWNER WAS BEATEN BUT RELEASED; HE REPORTEDLY TOLD POLICE THAT HE OVERHEARD HIS ATTACKERS DISCUSSING USE OF THE CAR FOR A BOMB ATTACK. EMBASSY IS TAKING ALL APPROPRIATE MEASURES.

4. WRAPPING UP THE DETAILS FROM THE PALACE OF JUSTICE, AS BEST WE HAVE THEM:

-- IT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED BY A HIGH LEVEL MILITARY SOURCE THAT SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT, ALFONSO REYES ECHANDIA, AND MAGISTRATE MARIA INES RAMOS WERE KILLED BY M-19 LEADER ANDRES ALMARALES LAST NIGHT. ALMARALES, THE APPARENT LEADER OF THE OPERATION, IS REPORTEDLY DEAD. THE SURVIVING GUERRILLAS HAVE ALL BEEN TAKEN PRISONER.

-- THE RESCUED HOSTAGES ARE BEING EVACUATED BY AMBULANCES, MANY OF THEM WOUNDED. THE GOC HAS ISSUED A CALL FOR AMBULANCES TO GO TO THE PLAZA DE BOLIVAR AND FOR VOLUNTEERS TO GIVE BLOOD FOR THE WOUNDED.

-- LENGTHY FIGHTING IN THE PALACE WAS REPORTEDLY DUE TO FIERCE M-19 RESISTANCE. ALSO, THE FIRES INSIDE THE BUILDING AT VARIOUS MOMENTS OBLIGED GOVERNMENT FORCES TO PULL BACK. APPARENTLY, M-19 USED THESE CONFIDENTIAL WITHDRAWALS TO RECOVER GROUND PREVIOUSLY LOST. AFTER BEING PENNED WITHIN A SMALL AREA OF THE FOURTH AND THIRD FLOORS AT ONE POINT, GUERRILLAS WERE LATER ENCOUNTERED IN ISOLATED HIDEOUTS VIRTUALLY THROUGH THE LARGE BUILDING. FINAL CASUALTY FIGURES NOT YET AVAILABLE.

5. EMBASSY MATTERS:

-- THREAT CALL AT BNC BARRANQUILLA: THIS MORNING THE BNC AT BARRANQUILLA RECEIVED A TELEPHONE BOMB THREAT FROM A CALLER WHO SAID "ALL OF YOU WILL EXPLODE TOO." A SEARCH WAS CONDUCTED WITH NEGATIVE RESULTS AND APPROPRIATE LOCAL OFFICIALS WERE ADVISED.

UNCLASSIFIED
FOLLOWING UP ON EMBASSY RESTRICTIONS REPORTED EARLIER: THE MARINE CORPS BALL SCHEDULED NOVEMBER 9 HAS BEEN POSTPONED.


GILLESPIE

CONFIDENTIAL