E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, ETRD, PINR, DR
SUBJECT: BALAGUER NAMES NEW CUSTOMS AND POLICE CHIEFS

1. (C) SUMMARY: PRESIDENT BALAGUER NAMED TEOFILO J. "QUICO" TABAR TO BE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CUSTOMS, AND GENERAL LUIS ANTONIO NUNEZ PAULINO TO BE CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL POLICE ON DECEMBER 4. TABAR IS A RETREAD, HE WAS REPLACED AS CUSTOMS DIRECTOR IN MAY 1994 AND NOW RETURNS TO THE POSITION HE HELD FOR EIGHT YEARS. ALTHOUGH DURING HIS PREVIOUS TENURE TABAR DID LITTLE TO ATTACK THE INSTITUTIONALIZED CORRUPTION FOR WHICH THE DOMINICAN CUSTOMS SERVICE IS NOTORIOUS, MANY OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT HE IS "RELATIVELY" CLEAN HIMSELF. NUNEZ WAS PREVIOUSLY POLICE COMMANDER FOR THE SOUTHERN

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REGION, AND REPLACES OUTGOING POLICE CHIEF GUERRERO AMID CONCERN OVER RIOTS IN LA VICTORIA PRISON. END SUMMARY.

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TEOFILO JOSE "QUICO" TABAR
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3. (C) EMBASSY OFFICIALS OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS HAVE FOUND TABAR TO BE VERY INTELLIGENT AND HARD-WORKING. HE RAN THE CUSTOMS OFFICE WITH A VERY PERSONAL TOUCH DURING HIS TENURE, MAKING ALL KEY AND MANY ROUTINE DECISIONS HIMSELF. TECHNICALLY, HE IS SUPPOSED TO REPORT TO THE FINANCE MINISTER, BUT IN PRACTICE THE CUSTOMS DIRECTOR REPORTS DIRECTLY TO PRESIDENT BALAGUER, WHO TAKES A KEEN INTEREST IN GOVERNMENT REVENUES. THE GOVERNMENT DEPENDS ON CUSTOMS REVENUES FOR INCOME. UNDER RISI REVENUES HAD REPORTEDLY DECLINED BY SEVEN PERCENT AND WERE CONTINUING TO DECLINE. TABAR IS VERY LOYAL TO THE PARTY AND TO BALAGUER PERSONALLY. HAVE ALSO OBSERVED THAT HE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE PERSONALLY CORRUPT, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE SOME DIFFERING OPINIONS. WITHOUT DOUBT, THE ORGANIZATION OVER WHICH HE PRESIDES IS AMONGST THE MOST

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CORRUPT IN A GOVERNMENT NOT KNOWN FOR ITS HIGH ETHICAL STANDARDS. DURING HIS PREVIOUS EIGHT YEARS AS CUSTOMS DIRECTOR, TABAR APPARENTLY MADE LITTLE EFFORT TO COMBAT THIS CORRUPTION.

GENERAL LUIS ANTONIO NUNEZ PAULINO


5. (C) MEDIA SPECULATION INDICATES THAT NUNEZ IS REPLACING RAFAEL GUERRERO PERALTA BECAUSE OF

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EMBARRASSING PUBLICITY STEMING FROM A RECENT RIOT AT LA VICTORIA PRISON. PRISONERS BEING HELD THERE DESPITE THE EXISTENCE OF JUDICIAL ORDERS FOR THEIR RELEASE RIOTED AND BURNED MATTRESSES AND OTHER POSSESSIONS TO PROTEST THEIR CONTINUED DETENTION LAST WEEK. IN RESPONSE, NATIONAL DISTRICT CHIEF PROSECUTOR ALEXIS JOAQUIN CASTILLO, WHO IS WIDELY BELIEVED TO BE AN ILLEGITIMATE SON OF PRESIDENT BALAGUER, HAS HEAVILY CRITICIZED THE NATIONAL POLICE.

6. (C) NUNEZ IS UNFAMILIAR WITH THE DETAILS OF SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS OCCURRING IN THE COUNTRY, SUCH AS THE DISAPPEARANCE OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR NARCISO GONZALEZ. SOURCES IN THE GODR SPECULATE THAT NUNEZ'S APPOINTMENT
WILL BE SHORT-LIVED,