STATE FOR ARA/AND, DRL, INL, L/LEI
NSC FOR JAMES DOBBINS
ONDCP FOR JANET CRIST
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
DEA FOR OF, OFL, 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: DECL: 10/31/07
TAGS: PTER, PHUM, ASEC, PINS, PGOV, PREL, CO
SUBJECT: "JAIME BATEMAN" LIVES: AND KIDNAPS COLOMBIAN JOURNALISTS

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CLASSIFIED BY POLLOFF MICHAEL J. FITZPATRICK. REASONS 1.5(B&D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: THE "JAIME BATEMAN CAYON MOVEMENT" HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DECEMBER 4 KIDNAPPING OF THE COLOMBIAN PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY AND A SENIOR RADIO JOURNALIST. THE JBC MOVEMENT, A SMALL SPLINTER GROUP OF THE LONG-DEMobilIZED M-19 GUERRILLA MOVEMENT, PROMISES TO RELEASE THE TWO IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS -- WITH A PEACE PROPOSAL FOR PRESIDENT SAMPER. AFTER A LONG QUIESCENCE, THIS ACTION SIGNALS THE RETURN OF THE JBC TO THE POLITICAL STAGE -- PERHAPS JUST IN TIME TO NEGOTIATE ARMISTICE WITH A LAME-DUCK PRESIDENT ANXIOUS TO SIGN A PEACE ACCORD WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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ANYONE WILLING TO SIT DOWN WITH HIM. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) EVER SINCE WILLIAM PARRA, PRESS SECRETARY FOR PRESIDENT SAMPER, AND LUIS EDUARDO MALDONADO, POLITICAL EDITOR OF THE RCR RADIO NETWORK, LEFT THE PRESIDENTIAL "NARINO" PALACE DECEMBER 4 FOR A MID-DAY BITE TO EAT, THEIR WHEREABOUTS AND THE REASONS BEHIND THEIR DISAPPEARANCE HAVE BEEN UNKNOWN. ANONYMOUS PHONE CALLS TO VARIOUS MEDIA OUTLETS INITIALLY CLAIMED "THE EXTRADITABLES" WERE RESPONSIBLE. SUNDAY'S "LONDON OBSERVER" CLAIMED THAT UNSPECIFIED PARAMILITARIES WERE INSTEAD TO BLAME.

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"JAIME BATEMAN LIVES"

3. (U) BUT NOW, THE MYSTERY AS TO WHO KIDNAPPED TWO OF COLOMBIA'S MOST PROMINENT NEWSMEN APPEARS TO BE RESOLVED. THE LONG-DORMANT "JAIME BATEMAN CAYON MOVEMENT" SENT A VIDEOTAPE TO A TELEVISION NEWS SHOW DECEMBER 8, CLAIMING THE JOURNALISTS HAD BEEN "INVITED" TO VISIT THE GUERRILLA GROUP'S BASE CAMPS. THE "JBC MOVEMENT", A DISSIDENT FACTION OF THE DEMOBILIZED M-19 MOVEMENT, SAID THE TWO DETAINES WILL BE RELEASED SHORTLY, "SAFE AND SOUND," AND CARRYING A PEACE PROPOSAL TO PRESIDENT SAMPER.


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TO CONSTRUCT DEMOCRATIC MECHANISMS TO RESOLVE THE ACUTE CRISIS WE ARE LIVING THROUGH." THE GUERRILLA SPOKESMAN ALSO SAID THE GUERRILLAS WOULD INSIST ON "A GRAND NATIONAL EFFORT TO INFORM THE NATION OF THE TRUTH ABOUT THE PALACE OF JUSTICE."

5. (U) PROSECUTOR GENERAL ALFONSO GOMEZ MENDEZ PUBLICLY DECRIED THE GUERRILLAS' METHODS OF ABDUCTING PEOPLE OFF THE STREET JUST TO DELIVER A MESSAGE TO THE GOVERNMENT. "IN THIS DAY AND AGE OF THE INTERNET, E-MAIL AND THE TELEPHONE," HE SAID, "THERE ARE A THOUSAND WAYS OF SENDING A MESSAGE WITHOUT RESORTING TO KIDNAPPING." PRESIDENT SAMPER HAS BEEN EVEN MORE HARSH IN HIS COMMENTS TOWARDS THOSE WHO HAVE TAKEN HIS PERSONAL PRESS AIDE.

BUT WHO THE HECK IS JAIME BATEMAN?

PARTY AND THE FARÇ, BATEMAN'S STRATEGY WAS, IN SHORT, "THE URBAN SPECTACULAR". EMPLOYING A MODEL FIRST PERFECTED BY THE NICARAGUAN SANDINISTAS (AND MOST RECENTLY EXERCISED BY PERU'S

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MRTA), the M-19 took over the National Day Reception at the residence of the Dominican Ambassador in February 1980, with dozens of high-ranking hostages (including U.S. Ambassador Diego Ascencio) in attendance. In November 1985, the M-19 had its greatest propaganda success -- and military defeat -- in the takeover of the National Palace of Justice. More than one hundred civilians, including the majority of the Supreme Court, plus dozens of M-19 Comandos died after the Army's 13th Brigade retook the palace while reducing it to a bloody inferno. (The palace is still under reconstruction.) Bateman himself never

WHY NOW? AND WHAT MIGHT IT MEAN?


12. (C) IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE JBC MOVEMENT MAY ATTEMPT TO TRADE ON ALL THIS RENEWED M-19 INTEREST IN EXCHANGE FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO COME IN FROM THE COLD, WRAPPED IN THE RAGGED
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DEA WASHDC
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AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LIMA

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AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
USINT HAVANA

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